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VOLUME III NUMBER 2

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

APRIL 1929

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

HYMNS AND HYMN WRITERS AMONG THE ANABAPTISTS
A. J. Ramaker

CONRAD GREBEL AS A HUMANIST
Edward Yoder

THE FIRST EDITION OF THE AUSBUND
Harold S. Bender

GEORGE SCHWERTFEGER'S POEM OF THE SWISS BRETHREN

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The
Mennonite Quarterly Review

Devoted to Mennonite History, Life, Thought, and Current Affairs
Published by Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana.
Edited by Harold S. Bender, Guy F. Hershberger, John Umble, Ernst Correll, and Edward Yoder

Table of Contents for Volume I, 1927

JANUARY

Editorial

False Patriotism I

The Mennonite Church and Hospital Work

Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature—A Critical Bibliography I, 1727-1827

Did Menno Simons Practice Baptism by Immersion?

Source Materials for Mennonite History —I. The Strasburg Discipline of 1568

Reviews and Notes

APRIL

Editorial

The Present Mennonite Migration

Endowments for Mennonite Colleges: Some Practical Problems

False Patriotism II

Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature II, 1828-1867

JULY

Editorial

An Historical Survey of the Position of the Mennonite Church on Non-Resistance I

Pacifism among the Mennonites, Amish Mennonites and Schwenkfelders of Pennsylvania to 1783 I

A Letter from Conrad Grebel to Andreas Castelberger, May 1525

The Mennonite Church and the Education of Her Youth

Source Materials for Mennonite History —II. Two Church Letters of 1817 and 1842

Reviews and Notes: Mennonites in North Carolina

OCTOBER

Editorial

Historical Survey on Non-Resistance II

Pacifism among the Mennonites of Pennsylvania II

Anabaptism in the Tyrol

Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature III, 1867-1886

Table of Contents for Volume II, 1928

JANUARY

Editorial

Recent Research in the History of the Tyrol-Moravian Anabaptists

Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature IV. 1887-1904

Remembrance: The First Ten Years of the Gemeente-Dag Movement in Holland

The Value of Family History for Mennonite History: With Illustrations from Nafziger Family Material I

APRIL

Editorial

The Hutterian Brethren, 1528-1928: A Story of Martyrdom and Loyalty I

The Mennonite Attitude and the Modern Peace Movement as Illustrated by the St. Louis Meeting of the World Alliance

John Kephart (1751-1822) Minister of the Doylestown Mennonite Congregation 1806-1822

Early Mennonite Sunday Schools I

Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature V. 1905-1927

The Value of Family History for Mennonite History II

What about the Outlawry of War: A Review and Discussion

JULY

Editorial

The Hutterian Brethren, 1528-1928, II

Mennonitism in a Latin-American Background

The Value of Family History for Mennonite History III: Johannes Nafziger's Letter

Early Mennonite Sunday Schools II

Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature VI. 1905-1927

OCTOBER, 1928

Editorial

Nine Letters of Conrad Grebel 1519-1521

The World War as Reflected in British Poetry

The Present Situation of the French-Speaking Mennonites

The Modern Church College and Character-Building

VOLUME III NUMBER 2

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

APRIL 1929

HAROLD S. BENDER, *Editor*

Associate Editors

ERNST CORRELL JOHN UMBLE GUY F. HERSHBERGER EDWARD YODER

EDITORIAL 91

HYMNS AND HYMN WRITERS AMONG THE ANABAPTISTS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. *A. J. Ramaker* 93

CONRAD GREBEL AS A HUMANIST. *Edward Yoder* . . . 132

THE FIRST EDITION OF THE AUSBUND. *Harold S. Bender* . 147

GEORGE SCHWERTFEGER'S POEM OF THE SWISS BRETHREN 151

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Should you desire to live with God,
Eternal Life inherit,
Then steadily walk the Master's way,
With him thou must be dying.
Thy simple heart
(With strong resolve)
Must rest in God's forbearance.
Thy earthly goods,
Thy life and all—
Thy Father must possess them.

—An Anabaptist Hymn Writer,
about 1525.

VOLUME III NUMBER 2

The Mennonite Quarterly REVIEW

APRIL 1929

EDITORIAL

One of the sincerest expressions of a religious movement is to be found in its hymnody. The deep currents of religious life seek expression in the free and moving forms of the religious lyric. This has been especially true of the Christian Church since Reformation times. The new life which pulsed through the common folk burst forth in a rich succession of fresh and vigorous hymns, especially among the German Protestants. The Lutherans and the Reformed early had their hymnals which were issued in repeated editions and in various forms. Likewise the Anabaptists, in whom flowed the deepest religious currents of the Reformation, brought forth their hymnody. In so far as the Anabaptist hymns differ from those of their fellow-Protestants, they reflect truly the life of the group, and are a very valuable historical source. The Anabaptist hymnody has been treated in German by several writers, but never in English so comprehensively and sympathetically as in the article, "Hymns and Hymn Writers Among the Anabaptists", by Dean A. J. Ramaker of the German Department of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York, in this issue. Dr. Ramaker presents a moving picture of the early Anabaptist hymns and their authors, and by copious extracts brings to life the intense spirit of their martyr songs. His discussion will be a much-appreciated contribution to a broader understanding of the Anabaptist movement.

As research in the life and work of Conrad Grebel continues, the figure of this first outstanding leader of the Swiss Brethren emerges more clearly from the obscurity which hangs around the personalities of most of the early Anabaptist leaders. In previous issues of the Review some of the letters of Grebel were presented. In the October, 1928, issue nine hitherto unpublished letters were presented in the Latin original and in English translation. Dr. Edward Yoder, Professor of Latin and Greek at Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas, has been devoting himself to special study in the letters of Grebel, and now presents a valuable portrait of Grebel as a Humanist. Based wholly on a first-hand study of the sources, this discussion makes a very necessary contribution to the understanding of Grebel's personality as a typical young humanist of his age, particularly before his conversion. The mystery of how such a man became the co-founder and martyr leader of a group so persecuted and despised as the Swiss Brethren of Zurich and Northern Switzerland becomes deeper as the figure of Grebel as a young humanist is clearly grasped.

The two smaller contributions to this issue of the Review have considerable historical importance. The first describes the recently discovered first edition of the *Ausbund* or its predecessor. The second presents an exceedingly interesting description of the Amish Mennonites of Alsace-Lorraine a hundred or more years ago in the form of a poem of twenty verses, which apparently has never before been published or even used by a historian.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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HYMNS AND HYMN WRITERS AMONG THE ANABAPTISTS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

A. J. Ramaker

1. The Development of the German Hymn.
2. The Anabaptists and their Sixteenth Century Environment.
3. Sources and Collections of Anabaptist Hymns.
4. Description and Evaluation of Anabaptist Hymns.
5. The Story of the Most Important Hymn Writers and Their Hymns.

* * * *

Introduction

The spiritual songs of the Anabaptists in the age of the Reformation stand in a two-fold relation to historiography. On the one hand they form a contribution to the study of German literature, specially significant because of the fact that these hymns were written and used in an age when the German language was entering upon its present period of development which made it the literary vehicle of the entire German people. On the other hand these hymns have a clearly defined religious and doctrinal significance, for they contain the religious ideals and convictions of one of the reformatory parties in that revolutionary age when the Mediaeval Church was breaking up in the lands of middle and northern Europe, and when a number of programs were being offered and hotly contended for. The program of the Anabaptists was the most radical of any proposed and therefore drew the fire of resentment and persecution from all the other parties, including the Old Church. The Anabaptist hymns are in so far historic hymns.

I.

The Development of the German Hymn.

Germany has been, and confessedly is today, the land of music and song. From the earliest days, when the German people first emerge in history by coming in contact with Roman civilization, their natural aptitude to give lyric expression to their feelings in song is made mention of by the Roman historian Tacitus[1]. He

informs us that they possessed songs which were "ancient" with them, their only "historical memorials". In these songs, he says, they were accustomed "to celebrate Tuesco, their earth-born god, and his son Mannus, the progenitors of their race". They sang songs also in praise of their heroes at their banquets and went into combat to the strains of their battle hymns.

For many years it had been held that these battle hymns were sung by a special class of bards like the Skalds of the Scandinavians, but German historians are now convinced that these songs were common property of the entire people.[2]

The "ancient" songs to which Tacitus refers were probably never reduced to writing and many of them were lost during the period of their migrations and forgotten amid the Christian surroundings of their newer southern homes. Only fragments have come down to the early middle ages, and these were frowned upon and often ruthlessly destroyed by the early Christian missionaries who had found in them a dreaded obstacle to the fuller Christianization of the German people.

It was most unfortunate that the Roman type of Christianity, with which the German tribes came in contact from the eighth century onward, made so little use of the splendid capacity for song inherent in the very fibre of the people. In their laudable and untiring missionary labors, these early monks made almost no use of the vernacular in their church services. They introduced the litany of the mass and other church offices in a language which was never understood by the people and this sometimes gave rise to parodies[3] that were neither complimentary nor particularly edifying. There were protests against this exclusive use of Latin in the church services as early as the time of Boniface (†755) and his Anglo-Saxon missionaries, but the people were admonished "to pray silently in their hearts".[4] The only concession from Roman usage Boniface would grant was that in the baptismal ceremony and in the recitation of the Pater Noster the vernacular should be employed. There was to be no congregational singing. The German language, it is true, was very crude, split up in many dialects and undeveloped in this early period, but if it sufficed for public prayer, there seems to be no valid reason why it should have been banned in public expression of adoration and praise in song.

To widen the gulf still more between a song-loving people and the new religion, which they often accepted only under compul-

sion, was the added fact that the intonations by the priests and the responses by the choirs of trained voices were set to Gregorian music, known as the Cantus Romanus. The early Ambrosian cantus, founded on the Greek system of the Eastern church, had allowed a popular congregational style of melody and this had spread rapidly throughout the western Christian world until it was superseded by the more stately and sonorous chant melody of Pope Gregory I. Various reasons have been advanced for this change, the chief one being that the Ambrosian melodies had found their way into the family circle, into the market place and social gatherings of the people, and had thereby become unsuitable in the religious services. "Die Gemeinde war dadurch um ihre bisherige lebensvolle Mitwirkung beim Gottesdienste betrogen."[5]

In short, there was no place in Roman Catholic worship for congregational singing throughout the Middle Ages. The Church authorities, bent on upholding a common liturgy in the Latin language for western Christendom, steadily opposed the introduction of popular church songs. As a consequence the vernacular hymn, both in its verse and in its melody, was a plant of very slow growth and was largely developed outside the Church.

What may be considered the very first beginnings of German hymnology were connected on the one hand with the so-called "Latin Sequences" and on the other hand with the extension of the "Kyrie Eleison" responses on the part of the people. The "Sequences"[6] were a liturgical innovation and tended to bring back a semblance at least, of melody in the church services. It had become difficult even for a trained choir to sing a long response of notes on a single syllable of a word, as was customary in the case of the last syllable of "Hallelujah". This compelled an addition of a number of short words and a corresponding change in vocal expression, and both finally led to lines and melody. The Church authorities, however, showed little appreciation for this innovation. Its influence on the melodies of the folk-songs is of greater importance, for the Latin sequences were translated into the vernacular and thus became the nuclei of religious songs.

Of vastly greater importance in the development of hymn singing were the so-called "Leison-songs" which first appear in the vernacular at about the eleventh century. These songs were metrical strophes in rhyme, each strophe ending with the response, "Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison". This response was embodied in the Latin liturgy from the early Greek service and retained its

Greek form. The oldest extant "Leison" or "Kirleison" is the hymn of Saint Peter, which has three strophes, of which the following is the first:[7]

Unsar Trohtin hat farsalt
Sancte Peter givualt
Das er mag ginerjan
Ze imo dingenten man.
Kyrie eleyson!
Christe eleyson!

* * * *

"Our dear Lord of Grace hath given
To Saint Peter power in heaven
That he may uphold alway
All who hope in him, and say—
Kyrie eleison!
Christe eleison!"[8]

The Kyrie eleison response was the only opportunity afforded the people to participate in the religious service of the Church, and it is quite understandable that these responses at times degenerated into an outcry which called down upon the people a public admonition "not to bellow so *dorperlich* and *rustice*". The response was extended later to the liturgies given on the great festival days of the church year. The "Kirleison" continued to flourish into the fifteenth century, growing meanwhile in the range of subjects and in the perfection of the rhyme and melody. The most popular "Leison" were the "Osterleis"—"Kyrie ist erstanden", the "Himmelfahrtsleis"—"Krist fuhr gen Himmel", and the "Pfingstleis"—"Nun bitten wir den heil'gen Geist", but these vernacular hymns never constituted any part of the regular church service.

But of greater importance for the development of German hymn singing were influences standing in no special relation to the Church, and the chiefest among them were the "Minnegesang" and the "Volkslied". The latter more than the former grew out of the life of the people. The "Volkslieder" were not distinctively religious and yet they contain a deep religious tone until the fifteenth century and even then they are not anti-religious. Dealing with all the experiences in the every-day life of the people, they called forth the lyric spirit in melody and verse as nothing had succeeded in doing before. There is a wonderful freshness and

vigor in its verse and a variety of melody which is simply marvelous. The authors are usually unknown, unless they reveal their identity in the last stanza of their song. These songs were usually spontaneous conceptions suited to the most varied moods of the common folks. It is not at all surprising that many of the Reformation hymns, both Lutheran and Anabaptist, adapted their songs to the well-known tunes of the folk-songs. In a considerable number of instances a folk-song becomes a religious hymn by slight changes in the text of the former. We note a few lines:

"Es han ein Man sin Wip verlor'n" became "Es hat ein Mensch Gots Huld verloren". "Den liebsten Bulen, den ich han" became "Den liebsten Herrn, den ich hab".

It is a well-known fact in Christian history that all deeper religious movements have given birth to new hymns, and that often the type of the new religious movement can be correctly evaluated by the lyric expression of the song writers. From the close of the fifteenth century onward, the German hymn, adopted for congregational service, was gradually coming into its own. The German mystics under the leadership of Tauler had composed songs which emphasized the deeper experiential side of Christian life but, like the grand old Latin hymns, their use was mostly confined to convents and monasteries. The Bohemian Brethren, after their complete separation from the Roman Church had created a body of hymns[9] and used them. But the German Reformation witnessed the greatest outburst of hymn-writing and hymn-singing in the history of Christendom.

Indeed it may be affirmed that the introduction of congregational singing did even more than did the reading of the New Testament to make the German Reformation a popular movement. Martin Luther is the founder of German hymnody. Intensely fond of both instrumental and vocal music and master of vigorous and popular German, he was the man to carry the development of the hymn to a height from which it never can be dislodged. It has become an essential of evangelical church worship.

The hymns of the Anabaptists, written in the era of Luther and his co-laborers, may claim a share, although a very modest one, in the early history of German hymnody.

II.

The Anabaptists and Their Sixteenth Century Environment

The name "Anabaptists", or rebaptizers, was applied in the era of the Reformation to a considerable body of Christians who, on New Testament grounds, had repudiated infant baptism and logically and conscientiously admitted into their membership by baptism only those who made confession of their personal faith in Christ. The designation carried a condemnatory and even odious implication in the thinking of the age.[10] It was, moreover, a misleading name. For the substitution of believers' baptism for pedobaptism with the Anabaptists was not the primary or even essential difference which separated them from the mediaeval Church and the protestant bodies then coming into being, notably the Lutheran and Reformed churches.[11] The Anabaptist ideal rather was the founding of smaller or larger groups of believers whose primary bond of union was a common spiritual experience, and baptism, as a New Testament ordinance following this experience, was in their judgment the outward public expression of the new life into which they had entered. It was their contention that in this way only could faith in Christ and baptism mark clearly the boundary line between the new and old in the life of a Christian. They appealed to the practise of primitive Christianity for their views and maintained that their movement was a rediscovery of the individualism of Jesus and Paul.

> "To their minds it was as preposterous to receive an unregenerated person into the fellowship of saints as to invite a deaf man into the society of musicians, or a cripple into an athletic association."[12]

> "Das eigentliche Wesen und darum das unterscheidende und natuerliche Merkmal dieser Richtung besteht in dem Dringen auf wirkliche, persoenliche Bekehrung und Wiedergeburt jedes einzelnen Christen durch den hl. Geist, auf voellige Gewissen- und Gottesdienstfreiheit, auf Trennung von geistlichen und weltlichen Dingen, von Kirche und Staat, und auf Darstellung und Einrichtung einer wahren hl. christlichen Gemeinde der Wiedergebornen durch einen besonderen Bund der Glaeubigen."[13]

The religious ideals for which the Anabaptists were contending meant a radical reconstruction of the mediaeval church, both as to the condition of church membership and in the relation of these organizations of believers to the state.

"The Reformers aimed to reform the old church by the Bible, the Radicals (Anabaptists) attempted to build a new church from the Bible."[14]

This was a step beyond reformation; it meant revolution. For the mediaeval church had been allied and firmly united with the state for more than 1200 years, whereas the Anabaptist position meant a sharply defined voluntarism which separated the baptized believers as well from the world as from the state-churches. The converts to Anabaptism therefore found themselves in a twofold opposition: to the mixed churches of the European Christian world and to the state authorities which were by law required to uphold the constituted order.

It seems almost incredible that this radical reformatory movement should have spread over so much territory in the first twenty-five years of its existence. From Zurich in Switzerland, where the first group of believers was constituted in 1525, it struck deep roots in nearly every one of the German cantons eastward and southward; it overleaped the Swiss boundary into the Tyrol because of persecution and found an asylum for a few years in Moravia; it found adherents in many of the larger cities of Austria, Hungary, and Southern Germany; it entered the Rhine Valley and swept northward into the Low Countries and Northern Germany. It was clearly a movement of the common people, and in intensity of conviction and endurance under insurpassable obstacles it far exceeded the more conservative movements headed by Luther and Zwingli. Toward the middle of the sixteenth century, when persecution became well-nigh universal, there was considerable migration of entire families and often larger groups from one Anabaptist center to another into localities where the opposition to their ideals was less violent. If repressive measures from the combined authorities of State and Church to stamp out Anabaptism had not been so relentless, there is no telling what the movement would have meant for Continental Protestantism.[15]

By putting into practise the religious ideals they had rediscovered, i. e. by organizing local bodies of believers, and by combining therewith a vigorous form of proselytism, the Anabaptists virtually severed the last cord which might have united them with the reformation bodies of the time. Living in an age when religious toleration was accepted by but a very few in high and influential standing, they had to feel the heavy hand of persecution. And with what brutality they were hounded to death, men,

women, and children in Catholic, Zwinglian, and Lutheran states! Thousands of innocent people perished by fire and sword, and countless numbers rotted in dungeons. Their martyr songs tell a story of ruthless barbarism such as Pagan Rome would revolt at. In justice it ought to be added that the religious ideals of the movement were grossly misunderstood and that the social revolution culminating in the Peasants' War of 1525 and the shocking extravagancies of the Muenster chiliasts in 1535 were indiscriminately charged to the account of all those who opposed pedobaptism. In the popular opinion of the time, the Anabaptists were enemies of the State and the Church, and to such no quarter was given.

The Anabaptist movement was not a homogeneous one in the sixteenth century in spite of its biblical ideals of a Christian life and the simplicity of its worship. The movement sprang up too suddenly and the repressive measures to root it out were too severe to allow time for the sifting out of unessential ideas which gained a footing among them. They had some outstanding leaders like Hubmaier among the Swiss Brethren, Peter Riedemann among the Hutterites, Thomas von Imbroich, Dirk and Obbe Philips, and Menno Simons among the Doopsgezinden and Mennonites. But the time of service of such men, with few exceptions, was cut short by their martyrdom. Their places were often taken by ill-balanced, short-sighted men who caused much disturbance and schisms among the common folk, by their legalism and literalism. There was a time, after the movement had continued about forty years, when it might have gathered to itself influential friends among the Reformed theologians in the Palatinate, without any sacrifice of biblical ideals on either side, but such attempts were wrecked by a short-sighted insistence on non-essentials.[16]

The Anabaptist movement of the eventful era of the German Reformation has gone down in history as especially remarkable for the large number of martyr-saints it has furnished and of which that age was wholly unworthy. A goodly number of these martyrs have given expression of their sublime faith in verse and song, but a still greater number, not having the gift of poetry, have furnished the material for others to do so. Indeed Anabaptist history of the sixteenth century is largely written in these historical songs.

III.

Sources and Collections of Anabaptist Hymns

The hymns of the Anabaptists remained almost wholly unknown to their contemporaries. They were written for use in their own groups, and these groups were obliged, because of the constant repressive measures against them, to meet in secret places. For a long time their spiritual songs were circulated by transcriptions, and when later in the century printed hymnals appeared, they were destroyed by the authorities. The hymns of the Hutterites, among whom the largest number were produced, were not collected and published in a hymnal at all; the source material for these lay buried in the archives of Austria and Hungary until our own day, when Joseph Beck and quite recently Rudolf Wolkan made access to them possible.[17] Finally the Hutterite Brotherhood in America published these hymns in a large hymnal at Scottdale, Pa., in 1914.

1. *The earliest available source for the hymns of the Swiss Brethren is a hymnal bearing the title*:

Auss-bundt,[18] *Etlicher schoener Christlicher Geseng, wie die in der Gefengnuss zu Passau im Schloss von den Schweitzern, und auch von andern rechtglaeubigen Christen hin und her gedicht worden.*

This hymnal bears the imprint: Anno MDLXXXIII. There were two earlier editions of this hymnal, issued in 1565 and 1569 respectively, but no copy of either has thus far come to light.[19]

This edition of 1583 is a composite of two shorter hymnals printed as two distinct parts, the second part bearing a separate title-page, a new numbering, and its own table of contents. For a long time it had been difficult to identify the "Passau prisoners" mentioned in the title of this 1583 edition and to answer the question raised how Swiss Brethren had found their way into a Bavarian prison and composed songs while there. This difficulty has been removed by Wolkan[20] who has had access to the "Passauer Akten" preserved in the state archives at Munich. The story is so intimately connected with a more accurate knowledge of our source material that it ought to find a place here. The Passauer prisoners were Anabaptists fleeing from Moravia westward into southern Germany at the outbreak of the first violent persecution there who were apprehended on their journey through Bavaria and thrown into prison at Passau. They were "Swiss Brethren"

who had found a short asylum in Moravia but had not identified themselves with the "Hutterite Brethren" there for various reasons. The name used in the title of the *Ausbund* is, therefore, correct but used in its later historical sense. There were "Swiss" in the Low Countries and elsewhere who had not identified themselves with either the Doopsgezinden or the Mennonites and retained their older name. "There was a church of the 'Oude Switzers' in Groningen, at the end of the eighteenth century."[21]

Note: The "Ausbund" has been republished many times during the succeeding centuries but gradually has been displaced by the German hymnals of the Mennonites who have made judicious use of the rich treasure of German hymns of other evangelical bodies. The Ausbund hymns have never been translated into English for the use of congregational worship. They were used in Switzerland among the "Alt-Taeufer" until the middle of last century and are now practically confined to the Old Order Amish congregations in the United States where the church services are still conducted in the German language.

2. *The source material for the hymns of the Hutterites has been gathered and published in 1903 by Dr. Rudolf Wolkan*[22] who has thereby placed historical science under very great obligation.

The Hutterites had made almost no use of the printing press but relied on transcriptions for the dissemination of their hymns. Only a small number of their songs found their way later into the hymnals of the other groups of Anabaptists. Like the Swiss hymns, they were written in the Old High German current in the sixteenth century.

3. A number of collections of *Dutch Anabaptist hymns* appeared in the Low Countries in the latter half of the sixteenth century; the first one was made by David Joris[23] in 1558 or 1559. His "Liedt-Boecken" contained a small number of martyr hymns together with a few songs of his own.

A second hymnal *Het twede Liederboeck* appeared in 1560 and ran through a number of editions in subsequent years, the songs increasing in numbers.

Of greatest importance, however, for the Dutch spiritual songs is a collection which appeared in 1562 and 1563 under the impressive title *Het Offer des Herren*, and contained two separate divisions. The first division contained pathetic stories of the sufferings of large numbers of Dutch Anabaptists in the form of

letters and confessions written from the various dungeons by the unfortunate prisoners to their friends outside. The contents of this portion of the book found its way into collections of martyrologies, notably into that of Tielman van Braght.[24] The second division bore the special title, *Ein Liedt-Boecxken*, containing songs written either by the martyrs themselves or by their friends who made the details of their sufferings and death the subject-matter of a hymn. This hymnal passed through five or six editions during the sixteenth century, each time increasing in the number of songs. It is generally quoted as *Het Offer des Herren* and may be looked upon as the principal source of Dutch Anabaptist hymns. The edition of 1570 is considered the fullest and most reliable.[25] This edition has been re-edited and published by Dr. S. Cramer[26] of the Doopsgezinde Seminary in Amsterdam.

A fourth hymnal appeared in 1569 under the title, *Veelderhande Liedekens*, containing 289 songs and purporting to be "een perfect ende volcomen Liedeboec". It contains a number of songs not met with in any of the previously mentioned collections—a proof that persistent persecution could not quench the religious convictions of the Dutch Anabaptists.

4. The years following the close of the Thirty Years' War mark the great productive period in German evangelical hymnody, especially in the Lutheran church. The Reformed church which had steadfastly resisted the introduction of hymns and chorals to take the place of psalm-singing in the church services, finally swung into line and the hymn writers of this branch of Protestantism vied with the Lutheran to augment the constantly growing body of German hymns. This period in the history of the hymn was not the time, then, to be especially concerned with hymn collections Not until the middle of the nineteenth century were attempt made to separate from the great mass of spiritual songs those which by their intrinsic value had become the common property of evangelical Christianity. Moreover, it had been felt that the hymns of a given period had both literary and religious value. The work of collecting these was at first confined to particular sections, but this was succeeded by two monumental undertakings having for their aim a history of German hymnody from the earliest time to the present. The men to make this ambitious venture were: Eduard Emil Koch, in his "Geschichte des Kirchenliedes und Kirchengesangs", eight volumes, Stuttgart, 1866-1876, and Philip Wackernagel, "Das deutsche Kirchenlied von

der aeltesten Zeit bis zu Anfang des XVII Jhs.", five volumes, Leipzig, 1864-1877.

The hymns of the Anabaptists were included in these two collections, but they fared badly. The Anabaptists were still the Ishmaelites of Protestantism. Koch devotes fifteen pages (Vol. 2, pp. 132-147) to their hymns under the caption: "Sekten und Schwarmgeister", while Wackernagel is more generous, having room for 171 of their hymns. Yet his bias may be seen from the following sentence:[27]

> "Ich hatte sie (die Anabaptisten) in meinem fruehern Werke Maertyrer genannt, kann aber dies jetzt mit ganzem gutem Gewissen nicht mehr tun: sie standen . . . . ausserhalb der heiligen lutherischen Kirche."

There was still much to be done in correcting the sixteenth century judgments on the Anabaptist movement. Their earliest history had to be rewritten from original sources. And this was done. Among those who during the past fifty years have given us this correcter conception and whose special contributions have meant much for the better understanding of the hymns which were produced, may be mentioned: Dr. Joseph Beck[28] and Dr. Rudolf Wolkan.[29] Both men have opened up the archives, public and private, and thereby added extremely valuable source material.

IV.

Anabaptist Hymns — Description and Evaluation

1. The progress of the Reformation in Switzerland, Germany, and the Low Countries released unlooked-for sources of spiritual enthusiasm among the common people of these countries, and much of this energy found expression in a literary activity of a new order such as these lands had not yet seen. The experience of the Waldenses of an earlier period and those of the Bohemian Brethren in the fifteenth century were repeated, but on a much larger scale. There began to appear as early as 1520, even before Luther's translation of the New Testament could be circulated, religious tracts in praise of a Christian life on a higher moral plane and more genuinely Christian than that which was current among the people then; pamphlets exposing some of the evils and corruption of the higher clergy and of the indolent life of the monastic orders were issued and widely read; songs in popular melodies, satirizing church practises were being heard—all of

which gave the authorities in church and state much concern. They were the distant rumblings of an approaching storm. Nearly all of this kind of literature fell victim, however, to the destructive madness of the governing class.[30]

Another type of literature appeared a little later, when the impending storm had fully broken and when the imperial edicts commanding relentless extirpation of all who were opposed to the old order of things were being executed. Then came the martyr tracts and the martyr songs, both intimately connected, the former in prose, the latter in verse. Luther's stirring hymn on the martyrdom of the two Augustinian monks at Brussels, "Ein neues Lied wir heben an"[31] is an example and probably the first (1523) of an almost unending series of the martyr songs which the sixteenth century brought forth. And with very few exceptions these all emanated from Anabaptist circles. This kind of song is unique in Christian history because dominant Christian authorities play the tragic role of persecutors.

These hymns mirror more accurately the Christianity of the century than any other historic account could sketch it. They are historic songs. On the one hand we see entrenched authority, knowing no other way of holding on but by brutal force, on the other the innocent victims suffering for conscience sake and leaving the issue with God. With consummate historic insight, Luther has given voice to the influence of slaughtered justice in the tenth stanza of his song just referred to, the echo of which is repeated hundreds of times in the martyr hymns of the Anabaptist victims later.

10. Die Asche will nicht lassen ab,
Sie staeubt in allen Landen,
Hie hilft kein Bach, Loch, Grub noch Grab,
Sie macht den Feind zu Schanden.
Die er ins Leben durch den Mord,
Zu schweigen hat gedrungen,
Die muss er Tot in allem Ort
Mit aller Stimm und Zungen
Gar froelich lassen singen.

* * * *

"Their ashes will not rest and lie,
But scattered far and near,
Stream, dungeon, bolt, and grave defy
Their foeman's shame and fear.
Those whom alive the tyrant's wrongs

To silence could subdue,
He must, when dead, let sing the songs
And in all languages and tongues
Resound the wide world through."[32]

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." (Tertullian). The songs of the Anabaptists were a most successful missionary propaganda.

2. The earliest of the Anabaptist hymns appear among the *Swiss Brethren*,[33] and they clearly characterize the depth of the Christian faith and the heroic and cheering hope of the hereafter which inspired their oldest group of hymns. They breathe the quiescent experiential type of Christian life and this is always ready to suffer imprisonment and death for cherished convictions. With few exceptions these hymns are martyr songs. Some of them were written while the unfortunate victims of persecution were languishing in prison, others were composed by their friends who wished to communicate their heroic sufferings to the Brethren. Those of Felix Manz, Georg Wagner, and Michael Sattler must have been in use about 1527, soon after these men suffered martyrdom.

The Swiss hymns traveled northward through southern and middle Europe into the Low Countries and Northern Germany, where there was an interchange of songs through free translations and consequent enrichment and enlargement of hymnals when these were issued later. There is much similarity in the religious experiences of the Swiss Brethren and the Anabaptists of the Low Countries and Northern Germany, and the fact that the latter groups furnished large numbers of martyrs brought a correspondingly large number of martyr songs into their collections of hymns.

3. Next in the order of time arose the *Hutterite* group of hymns which had their origin in Moravia among German-speaking Anabaptist exiles who had found there a haven of quiet, at least for a short period. These Moravians had taken their name from Jacob Huter, one of the most zealous of their earliest leaders, burned at the stake in the Tyrol in 1536. They settled in "Haushaben" (Communal houses) which at times sheltered from 20 to 30 families. They became pronounced believers in a kind of pacific communism after the pattern of the early Jerusalem church (Acts 4:32). In their church life they experienced some un-

fortunate schisms and upon the whole developed a type of life which their Swiss and Dutch brethren did not accept. They wrote a considerable body of hymns of their own which, as already has been stated, were not printed until 1914 and were almost wholly confined to their own groups. As a result of their tragic experiences, the vast majority of their hymns became martyr songs also. Yet they had produced a considerable number of hymns in which defense is made of their views on baptism, Lord's supper, defencelessness, and communism. Their communal life subjected them to almost unbelievable hardships from 1535 onward when Austrian authorities finally decreed their banishment or extermination. In these years it happened that as many as 150 persons, men, women, and children, were arrested at one time, thrown into prisons for months, the authorities finally slaughtering the men who would not recant and driving the women and children out of the country. A most remarkable and touching hymn had its origin in the prison at Falkenstein:

"Guter Vatter im Himmelreich,
Ich thue dich fleissig bitten."

which has been preserved under the title: "Ein Lied von den zwanzig Briedern auf Falkenstein."[34]

The Hutterites had some very able leaders among whom may be mentioned Balthasar Hubmaier (pre-Hutterite period), burned at the stake in Vienna in 1528; Peter Riedemann, Haensel Reiffer, Wolf Sailer, Leonhard Lochmayer and Oswald Glaidt—men who produced some of their most valuable hymns.

4. The *Dutch* hymns present a characteristic wholly unique in the hymnodies of the Christian world. They are "Klagelieder" (Lamentations), many of which fill the soul of a sympathetic reader with horror and indignation at the harrowing narrative of wholesale and retail murders perpetrated in the name of religion. It is quite understandable that the "Liederboecken", our oldest and completest source of these hymns, forms a part of a martyrology fitly entitled, "Het Offer des Herren". That "bloody second century" in early Christian history is much less brutal in comparison with this sixteenth century portrayal. Under the influence of such a narrative, Milton's outburst of a divine *lex talionis*:

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered Saints"

becomes a fitting prayer. And the "patience of the saints" stands out once more in bold relief.

From the point of view of literary finish in language or versification, those gripping Dutch hymns have very little value. They are melancholy outbursts, not of anger but of protest against the crimes their governments were committing in the name of the "Lord of Peace". Sometimes a "woe" is pronounced against a city or a province.

"O Coellen, Coellen an dem Rein,
Wenn wilt ein mal satt werden
Des Bluts der Hilligen Gottes rein,
Die von dir getoedtet werden!"[35]

There is scarcely a joyful line in all that large collection of songs. Only detailed narration of suffering by a proverbially stolid and undemonstrative people who fitly can be called the "Crossbearers" and "slaughtered sheep" of the Reformation period.

"Mit einen droeen Sanghe
Sing ick ein droenich Lied."

"O Godt, ick moet u Klagen
Myns Hart droelich Leyt."

And still there is in the dark Rembrandts of these songs a flash of light illuminating the faces of the martyrs as they are being led to the places of execution: like their divine Master they die with a prayer on their lips for their persecutors. The conquered proclaim that they have conquered—"Victi se vicisse proclamant."

5. From the Sources and Collections, to which reference has already been made, we can form some estimate of the number of hymns produced by the various Anabaptist groups from about 1527, when the first ones probably appeared, to 1570 when the productive period seems to have come to an end. Subtracting duplicates, a fair estimate for that half century would be about 750, and about one-half of these are martyr or historic songs.[36]

6. By what standard shall this body of spiritual songs be judged? Obviously, not by the best of our day, for there are thousands of present day productions which cannot measure up to such a standard. Rather by that of the sixteenth century. For let it be remembered that congregational singing was yet in its infancy at the beginning of that century. The people had become

so accustomed to the liturgy sung by the priests and choirs that they had to be taught to sing and, judging from Luther's own experiences in the Stadtkirche at Wittenberg after he had removed the Roman mass, this education was no easy undertaking. The essentials of a good hymn in melody and verse had to be discovered by experience and this fell to the lot of the hymn writers who often were obliged to be both poets and melodists. And above all, this new type of Christian conviction, the evangelical in place of the Roman type, needed expression in song. And there was need of a new group of spiritual hymns which would allow the people to express what the preachers were conveying to them in sermons. The hymns of the Reformation period needed for this subject matter, therefore, the newly discovered emphasis on salvation by faith and not by works, and they also needed the strong notes of aggression and defense. But all this was much more easily acquired than a rhythmic perfection of verse coupled with tuneful, worshipful melody — sacred poetry so attuned that it would kindle devotion and lead the soul in adoration to God in praise and prayer. All hymns of the period of beginnings fell short in this last desideratum.

Measured by the general standard of the time, Anabaptist hymns have some excellencies in their favor: they are simple, fresh, and full of reality in their religious convictions—always prime requisites of a good hymn. They have developed along two main lines: there are hymns in defense of the particular views of evangelical truth which they had come to accept and there are hymns which narrate the tragedies of their movement. In this latter line, their hymns stand quite alone. In the so-called doctrinal songs they speak of regeneration by God's spirit and not by water baptism; the Lord's supper is a memorial of the death of Christ and not an exhibition or partaking of his veritable body through bread and wine; the Christian life is an imitation of Christ's life on earth and they therefore lament in many songs over the low state of life and morals surrounding them and exhort to a better living; the belief that the end of the world is imminent they share with their day. Sometimes a hymn will strike a broader note and speak of God's wonders in nature, but this is exceptional. The hymns feed on the Bible and many of them are attempts to express in metric form stories of the Gospel or treat of Apographa and Old Testament characters like Sarah, Deborah, Esther, Miriam, Judith, and the men in the fiery furnace.

The Martyr Hymn is contemporaneous history for them. They are nearly all of excessive length and justify the inference that the writers had it in mind to produce religious prose for an intimate circle of friends rather than a hymn for congregational use. Some of the detailed descriptions in them are so harrowing that they cannot be sung even if they had been written to a popular tune. One example[37] out of a larger number is the song of Hans Krael in six stanzas, of which we will quote the first and the fifth:

1. Kain Underschaidt het ich nit mer,
Wen es Tag oder Nacht hie wer,
Ich wist es nit auf Erden
In diser boesen finstern Keich.
Die Nacht aber merckht ich nur gleich,
Wen es Kieler thet werden.
Den bei Tag war es in dem Loch
So duenstig und warmdempfig doch,
Es faulten an meinem Leibe
Meine Klaider gleich alle gar,
Dass ich nunmehr vast nackend war
Und mier nicht ueber bliebe.

1. Lag also in dem tieffen Thurm,
Der war voll Unsiffer und Wirm
Die machten mir vil graussen,
Also dass ich ums irentwill
Erstlichen musst mein Haubt verhiln,
Ein lange Zeit durchsasse,
Bis dass sies hoch gewohnet sein;
Sie frassen mir das Essen mein,
Wenn sie es han geschmeckhet.
Und so ichs nit verzert ger baldt
So kund es mir nit bleiben kalt,
Wenns gleich im Busen steckhet.

By comparison with the splendid body of German hymns which the Lutheran divines produced in the same era, these Anabaptist productions are decidedly inferior both in language and objective treatment of the subject matter. And there are many reasons for this. The High German of the sixteenth century, which in subsequent centuries became the present literary medium of the German people, was yet in a transitory stage and it was Luther's consummate linguistic genius[38] which laid the foundation for this later development. He not only compelled his learned co-laborers to fuse a new amalgam out of the various dialects in his

time, he taught all Germany, even the Catholic schools in Austria, to speak as he had written. Luther's helpers in producing German hymns were learned men and were not dependent upon the uncouth speech of the common people. The Anabaptist hymn writers, with very few exceptions, springing from the common people with few advantages of education, were here at a decided disadvantage. Some illustrations of their inability to handle the language may be taken at random:

"Got hoert kein gottlos Bruellen.
Was sein Maul brumm
Weists Herz nit um."[39]

Such speech was current among the common people and Luther himself could make right good use of it, but he reserved it for his great and good friend, the Pope, with whom he sometimes conversed in "gut Deutsch".

Anabaptism, as has been stated, was a movement among the common folk in a yet completer way than was that of Luther and Zwingli. However advantageous that might have been for purposes of propaganda, in the matter of hymn writing it proved a great disadvantage, for it accentuated the individualism of the writers to such an extent that it destroyed the objectivity of their song. The Lutheran hymns are never guilty of this grievous fault. With them it is not the individual but the church, the visible body of Christ, which is in the mind of the singers. Even Christian truth is presented objectively. A few illustrations:

"Zu singen vil *ich* heben an—"
"Nun hoert *mir* zu in mein Gedicht—"
"Hoerent, ihr allerliebsten mein—"
"Weil *ich* so arm und ellent bin—"
"Ich armes Bruederlein klag mich sehr—"

It is not in the outward form of the hymns nor in their subject matter that the real appeal of these songs can be found. Their horizon of religious truth is very much circumbscribed, and one confesses to a feeling of wearysome monotony when reading the hymns to-day. The appeal is rather to the heart than to the head. There is in them a reality of religious convictions which is remarkably deep and genuine. Wackernagel, in a later sentence, makes amends for an unsympathetic remark he had made (Vol. 3, p. 439) concerning the Anabaptists when he speaks of their hymns:[40]

"Aus dem Studium ihrer Lieder, die noch kaum jemals in Betracht gezogen wurden . . . . wird sich ein gerechteres Urteil, auch eine bessere Geschichtsschreibung denn die vorhandene ergeben."

May we conclude this rapid survey of the hundreds of their hymns by expressing the conviction that the Anabaptist writers gave the best that was in them, and the greatest of their best was the love they could express for their enemies and murderers.

Their songs have not survived and served a later age in congregational worship. The stronger bodies of Mennonites and Doopsgezinden, in Europe and America, have discarded their use. Their main value in our day is the historic one. And still one would wish to know why they have become historical relics, largely. Probably one chief reason may be found in the fact that these hymns were so dependent upon the melodies of the folksongs when they were written and that later, when these had become wholly unsuited for religious usage, there was no melodist forthcoming among them as was the case with Lutheran and Reformed hymnists. A good melody keeps a poor song alive, a poor one kills it outright.

V.

The Story of the Most Important Hymn Writers and Their Hymns

In the appendix to his collection of Anabaptist hymns, Wolkan[41] has furnished an alphabetically arranged tabulation of all Anabaptist hymn writers whose names were known to him, including in his list also those who had furnished only one hymn apiece. His catalogue contains 130 names and the total number of hymns attributed to these 130 writers is 269. That is to say that, on the basis of about 770 hymns accounted for by him, the authorship of about 72 per cent is unknown. Wackernagel's collection of these hymns is much smaller but substantially the same ratio holds good there.

In the selection of authors who furnished hymns of most intrinsic value, we soon discover that they were in most cases also the leaders of the movement. For their life's story we are dependent largely on Joseph Beck,[42] "Het Offer des Herren", and the histories on the Anabaptists. The purpose of this essay obviously does not allow for extended narration.

1. The oldest hymn in point of time is attributed to Hans Koch and Leonhart Meister, both of whom suffered martyrdom in Augsburg in 1524. The hymn

"Ach Gott Vatter im hoechsten Thron
Schau jetzund an
Das Ellend deiner Knechte—"

has been incorporated in the *Ausbund*,[43] but Wolkan[44] is probably right that both men were Waldenses, for their names do not appear in the earliest accounts of Anabaptist history, and the date of their martyrdom, if correct, would substantiate his opinion.

2. *Felix Mantz* belonged to a small and scholarly group of men who aided Zwingli in introducing the Reformation in Zurich from 1519 onward, but with others regretfully parted company with the pastor of the Grossmuenster on one of the most fundamental questions of their program of reform: the New Testament basis for church membership which Zwingli would not accept. Mantz continued to spread his views, was arrested, thrown into prison, and finally suffered martyrdom by drowning in the Limmat river on January 5, 1527. He is the author of a hymn[45] of 18 stanzas. The hymn is a song of praise for God's love and forbearance to him. God's righteousness is contrasted with the injustice of the false prophets and hypocrites. Christ knows his great sorrow, and to Him he will cleave. The hymn is a good example of the outstanding characteristic of the songs of the Swiss Brethren: their quiet fortitude in suffering and death. We select two stanzas:

1. Mit Lust so will ich singen,
Mein Herz freut sich in Gott,
Der mir viel Kunst tut bringen,
Dass ich entrinn dem Tod,
Der ewig nimmt kein End.
Ich preiss dich, Christ von Himmel,
Der mir mein Kummer wend'.

15. Die Neid und Hass erzeigen,
Moegen nit Christen sein,
Und sich zum Boesen neigen.
Schlagen mit Faeusten drein,
Laufen vor Christo wie Moerder und Dieb.
Unschuldig Blut vergiessen,
Ist aller Falschen lieb.

* * * *

Note: A metric translation *in blank verse* preserves the language of the original hymn—which frequently is quaint, terse, and homely—more accurately than does a translation in rhyme which would be obliged to translate the thought more or less freely. It is for this reason that blank verse has been preferred in translations.

1. With gladness will I sing now,
My heart delights in God,
Who showed me such forbearance,
That I from death was saved
Which never hath an end.
I praise thee, Christ in Heaven,
Who all my sorrow changed.

15. Who hate and envy showeth
Can never Christians be.
Who lend an ear to evil
Who hasten from Christ like robbers and thieves,
Innocent blood are shedding—
The Goal of all untruthful.

3. *Joerg vom Hause Jacob*, (*Georg Blaurock*). As the name indicates, "Blaurock" had joined a monastic order and had resided at a monastery named House of Jacob before he became a convert to Anabaptism. He was the first to receive a rebaptism at the hands of Conrad Grebel in Zurich.[46] He was a forceful and eloquent preacher and made many converts. For this he was apprehended, thrown into prison, and sentenced to death by drowning, which sentence was changed to banishment from the Canton on the ground that he was no Swiss subject. His banishment was accompanied by a severe whipping on the same day that Mantz was drowned. He was beaten

> "all the way from the Fishmarket to the Niederdorf gate until the blood flowed."

He found his field of labor in the Tyrol where at Claussen he was burned at the stake, September 6, 1529.

From him we have two hymns:[47]

"Gott fuehrt ein recht Gericht", 33 stanzas, and "Herr Gott, dich will ich loben", 13 stanzas.

In his first hymn he speaks of the Day of Judgment when God will dispense final justice which no one can escape:

5. So er kommt in sein Herrlichkeit,
Dass ers Gericht wird besitzen,
Dann wird es ihnen werden leid,
Kein Ausred wird sie schuetzen.

* * * *

When he appears in glory great,
When he shall sit in judgment,
Then will they sorrow grievously,
No plea will then protect them.

6. Sein Wort laesst Er hie seigen an:
Der Mensch soll sich bekehren,
Glauben dem Wort und taufen lahn,
Und folgen seinen Lehren.

* * * *

God speaks and warns through his own Word,
That man must be converted,
Must trust the word and baptized be
And follow its instructions.

His second song is in praise of God's leadership in his life. Especially does he make mention of the time when he first came to experience the joy of personal faith in Christ, his Lord. This note is found in many of the hymns of the Swiss Brethren.

1. Herr Gott, dich will ich loben,
Von jitzt bis an mein End,
Dass du mir gebst den glauben
Durch den ich dich erkendt.

* * * *

Lord God, how do I praise thee,
From hence and evermore,
That thou real faith didst give me
By which I thee may know.

The latter half of the hymn is a prayer to God for strength that he may be true to the last.

6. Vergiss mein nicht, O Heere!
Wollst allzeit bei mir sein,
Dein Geist mich schuetz und lehre,
Dass ich in Leiden mein
Getroestet werd zu aller Zeit,
Und ritterlich erober
Den Sieg in diesem Streit.

Forget me not, O Father,
Be near me evermore;
Thy spirit shield and teach me,
That in afflictions great
Thy comfort I may ever prove,
And valiantly may attain
The victory in this fight.

4. *Georg Wagner*[48] was burned at the stake in Munich, February 8, 1527. He had been a leader of the Anabaptists for a short time only but had made a deep impression upon their circles. While in prison he was much importuned to recant but he remained unmoved. He left two hymns:[49]

"Den Vatter wolln wir loben", 11 stanzas, and "Wer Christo jetzt will folgen nach", 27 stanzas.

The first song begins by praising God but soon turns into prayer that he may not falter in his zero hour that is approaching and winds up with an exhortation to his brethren to be firm.

"In seiner Schlichheit gehoert es mit zu den Perlen taeuferischer Dichtung."[50]

1. Den Vatter wolln wir loben,
Der uns erloeset hat,
Im Himmel hoch dort oben,
Durch seines Sohnes Tot,
Welchen er hat gegeben
Zu versoehnen unser Suend,
Das wir im Glauben leben,
Als sein gehorsam Kind.

* * * *

Our Father, we would praise thee,
Who dwell'st in Heaven above;
Thee, who didst free and save us
Through Christ who suffered death;
The Son whom thou hast given
To 'tone for our sin,
That we in faith may live
As children of thine own.

The second hymn portrays in much detail the court proceedings leading to his martyrdom. Since this song must have come very early into the possession of the Anabaptist groups, it is possible that it served as a model for the great number of martyr songs which followed in this sixteenth century because of the great length of the production and minute narration of the court proceedings, adding thereto a glorious confession of faith, all of

which is found in this hymn, and has become common property of the historic martyrology, in prose or verse, of these Anabaptist people.

We append some examples of this detail:

6. "Zween Barfuessermoench im grauen Kleid
Joerg Wagner troesten in sein Leid,
Sie wollten ihn bekehren;
Er wies sie in ihr Kloesterlein,
Ihr Red' wollt er nit hoeren.
* * * *

Franciscans two in grayish dress
Brought comfort to him in his woe;
They sought much to convert him.
He sent them back to their own cells,
He would not hear their talking.

23. Zween Henker stunden beider Seit,
Den Ring um ihn zu machen weit,
Joerg Wagner sprach den Glauben.
Zugegen stand ein grosse Schar,
Von Maennern und von Frauen.
* * * *

Two hangmen stood on either side,
The ring about him made they wide,
Joerg Wagner Christ confesseth.
About him stood a great concourse
Of men and women present.

5. *Michael Sattler* was burned at the stake, May 21, 1527, at Rottenburg on the Neckar River. He was one of the ablest and noblest of the early Anabaptists. The Strassburg Reformers called him *"lieber Freund Gottes"*.[51] Like Blaurock, he had been a monk. Leaving the monastery of St. Peter in the Black Forest, he came to Zurich in 1525 and joined the group of Brethren there but was soon driven into exile. He labored very successfully in Rottenburg where he founded several churches. He framed the earliest confession of faith, the so-called "Articles of Schlatten am Randen"[52] which were afterward translated into Dutch and found a place in "Het Offer des Herren."[53] The sentence of death pronounced upon this man is one of the most barbarous in the annals of mediaeval history. "The hangman shall bring him to the place of execution, there cut out his tongue, then tear his body twice with red-hot tongs, then bring him before the city gates and there club him five times and then burn him to powder

as a heretic; his colleagues shall die by the sword; the sisters shall be drowned including his wife."[54] And this was carried out as commanded:[55] nine men were beheaded and ten women were drowned.

The two hymns[56] usually credited to Sattler:

"Als Christus mit seiner wahren Lehr", and "Mit Lust will ich Gott loben",

are probably not his songs at all. The first one appears in the hymnal of the Bohemian Brethren in 1531 among the hymns of Michael Weisse, and the second, found in the *Ausbund* under the initials "M. S." among the Passauer hymns, has been attributed to various writers. Wolkan[57] has made out a strong case for the authorship of Michael Schneider.

Burrage[58] has a free translation of three stanzas of the first hymn attributed to Sattler.

6. *Leonhard Schiemer*, beheaded at Rottenburg on the Inn river, Janhary 14, 1528. He had been a Franciscan but left the monastery because of the dissolute life led there by his brother monks. He went to Nuernberg where he learned the tailor trade and coming to Nickolsburg, in Moravia, as a journeyman tailor was greatly influenced by Hubmaier. Returning to Vienna he was baptized by Oswald Glaidt and soon became a missionary bishop, preaching and working at his trade in Austria and Bavaria with great success. He was finally apprehended and beheaded. His death marks the beginning of the Austrian persecutions which cost the lives of thousands.

"Es war allenthalben ein jaemmerliches Wuergen und Jagen der Neuglaeubigen."[59]

Schiemer's hymn[60] is a martyr song of unusual impressiveness: "Wir bitten dich, iniger Gott"—11 stanzas, of which we select the third, fourth, and fifth.

3. "Dein heilge Stadt hand sie zerstoert,
Dein Altar umgegraben
Dazu auch deine Knecht ermordt
Wo sies ergriffen haben
Und wir allein, dein Haeuflein klein
Sind wenig ueberblieben
Mit Schmach und Schand durch alle Land
Verjaget und vertrieben.

4. Wir sind zerstreut gleich wie die Schaf,
Die keinen Hirten haben;

Verlassen unser haus und Hof,
Und sind gleich dem Nachtsraben,
Der sich auch oft haelt in Steinklufft.
In Felsen und Steinklueften
Ist unser Gemach, man stellt uns nach
Wie Voegel in den Lueften.

5. Wir schleichen in den Waeldern um,
Man sucht uns mit den Hunden;
Man fuehrt uns als die Laemlein stumm
Gefangen und gebunden.
Man zeight uns an vor jedermann,
Als waeren wir Aufruehrer,
Wir sind geacht, wie Schaf zur Schlacht,
Als Ketzer und Verfuehrer.

* * * *

3. Thine holy city they destroyed,
Thine altar overthrew they,
Thy servants have they put to death,
Where they could apprehend them.
Of us alone, thy little flock,
But few are still remaining.
Throughout the land, in shameful flight,
Disgraced, they have expelled us.

4. Scattered are we like flocks of sheep
Without a shepherd near us;
Abandoned stand our home and hearth
And like the owl or birds of night
Seek shelter we in caverns.
In clefts, on crags, in rocky wilds
We make our home—still they pursue;
Like birds or fowl we're hunted.

5. We stealth'ly move through forests dark,
With hounds they seek to track us,
Like speechless lambs they lead us forth,
Like captives wearing shackles;
Denounce us freely everywhere,
As though we stirred up riot,
Are looked upon for shambles fit—
Deceivers and heretics.

7. *Balthasar Hubmaier* was without doubt the ablest man to espouse the Anabaptist cause in the sixteenth century. He was successively professor of theology at Ingolstadt, Cathedral preacher at Ratisbon, removed to Waldshut near Basel and became parish preacher. Here he became acquainted with the Swiss Reforma-

tion and aided Zwingli in 1523 but soon accepted the Anabaptist position in reference to church membership and believers' baptism. His services in the ranks of his new co-religionists extended over but a little more than two years, 1526-1528. Expelled from Switzerland, he found refuge in Nickolsburg, in Moravia, where he labored with signal success until the Austrian government compelled his extradition. He was burned at the stake in Vienna, March 10, 1528. He was a most prolific writer.[61]

The hymn attributed to Hubmaier:

"Frewt euch, frewt euch in diser Zeyt,
Ir werden Christen alle!"—18 stanzas,

is not found in any edition of the *Ausbund*, nor does Wackernagel[62] assign it to Hubmaier. It appears in a hymnal in the Low Countries and later among the Hutterites.[63] The title, as found in Wkl., is: *Ein Preisslied goettlichen Worts,* which describes the contents correctly. The author sings of Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, the Evangelists, Paul, Peter, James, Jude, and Jesus Christ. The hymn is printed in the original with a splendid translation in Vedder, *Balthasar Hubmaier,* pp. 311-321.

8. *Hans Schlaffer.* The Hutterite "Cronickel" informs us[64] that Schlaffer had been a priest and, after having accepted Anabaptist views of salvation, went to Moravia and labored there with signal success as teacher and preacher of the gospel. During his imprisonment he was repeatedly tortured to compel him to recant but to no avail. He was beheaded, February 3, 1528, at Schwatz, in the valley of the Inn. The "Cronikel" adds:

"Nach ihm sein 19 Personen hingerichtet worden."

He must have been a man whose prayers made impression on his hearers, for Beck[65] prints two prayers of his, the last one having been written by Schlaffer on the evening before his martyrdom.

Two hymns[66] are ascribed to him:

"Ungnad begehr ich nicht von dir"—9 stanzas—and "Herr Vatter, mein ewiger Gott."

The first hymn is a prayer that God would not condemn him for his transgressions. A deep consciousness of ill desert pervades the entire hymn, but also a strong trust in the merits of Christ, his Saviour. He laments the circumstance that there are so few who speak the truth of God's word to the erring masses.

The second hymn is not found in the *Ausbund* nor in Wacker-

nagel, but has been incorporated in a hymnal of the Bohemian Brethren.[67]

9. *Ludwig Hetzer.* The "Cronikel"[68] speaks of Hetzer as a "very learned man", which he must have been, for his translation of the prophets out of the original Hebrew into German, with the help of his friend, Hans Denck, was no mean undertaking for his age. This translation[69] was used extensively in southern Germany and by both the Lutheran and Swiss translators. He fell under the suspicion of holding anti-trinitarian views and was also accused of bigamy, this latter charge being made as justification for his decapitation which occurred at Constance, February 4, 1529. The accusations have not been substantiated.[70]

Hetzer's linguistic accomplishments are clearly discernable in three hymns[71] of his which have come down to us. They have been incorporated in a number of early Lutheran and Swiss hymnals but have not been admitted in the *Ausbund*—a fact which it is difficult to explain except on the supposition that the distorted reports of his trial were believed. Some later historians maintain that he ought to be classed with Thomas Muenzer as an Anti-pedobaptist but not as an avowed Anabaptist. The hymns attributed to him are:

"Solt du bey Got dein Wonung han"—9 stanzas; "Erzuern dich nicht, O frommer Christ"—23 stanzas; "Geduld solt han auf Gottes Ban"—3 stanzas.

The first hymn is an admonition for a strong Christian faith, the first verse containing the theme which is amplified in the verses following:

Solt du bey Got dein Wonung han
Und seinen Hymel erben,
So bleib nur staedts auff seiner Pan,
Mit Christo must du sterben.
Du must dein Hertz.
(Es gilt kein Schertz),
In Gottes Gunst versenken;
Dein Hab und Gut,
Auch Leib und Blut
Gentzlich dem Vater schencken.

* * * *

Should you desire to live with God,
Eternal life inherit,
Then steadily walk the Master's way,
With him thou must be dying.

Thy simple heart
(With strong resolve)
Must rest in God's forbearance.
Thy earthly goods,
Thy life and all—
Thy Father must possess them.

The last stanza of this hymn is splendidly translated by Burrage, *Baptist Hymn Writers*, page 17.

The second of Hetzer's hymns is a metric paraphrase of Psalm 37, a custom which hymn writers of the Reformed Church followed almost exclusively in this period of hymn composition.

The third hymn is suggested by Romans 5:4, that "Patience leads to experience" (German translation).

10. *Hans Hut.* The "Cronickel"[72] gives a harrowing account of the tortures this man was obliged to endure before his body was burned at Augsburg in 1529. He was racked in the torture chamber and left for dead. A lamp left with him ignited the straw and he was suffocated. His judges nevertheless had him propped up in a chair and pronounced sentence that the body be burned. There are some other accounts of his death, but this one seems to be the most probable.

Hut had come under the influence of Thomas Muenzer and was mixed up in the uprisings of the Peasants, which circumstance weighed heavily against him with the civil authorities. He was an energetic preacher and travelled extensively in Bavaria, Silesia, Moravia, and Austria, and toward the end of his career was pastor of the Augsburg church.

We have three hymns[73] from him, of which only the first is found in the *Ausbund.*

"O allmaechtiger Gott", 12 stanzas; "Lass uns von Hertzen singen all", 8 stanzas; "O Herr Gott, in deinem Reich", 8 stanzas.

The first hymn, the *Ausbund* informs us, was composed while he was in prison at Augsburg. It is a song in praise of God's will which He has disclosed in his church (stanza 1) and in the Scriptures (stanzas 7, 8, 9) but also in nature (stanzas 2-6).

"Der Himmel und das Firmament
Uns zeygen die Werk seiner Haendt" (3)

"Die werke Gotts sind ueberal
Auf hohen Berg und tiefen Thal,
Dazu in ebenen Felden.
Die Voegel in den Waelden
Tun uns die Wahrheit melden" (4)

This wider outlook upon the world in the stanzas just quoted is very rare in the hymns of the Anabaptists, and that a man under severe torture facing death should rise above his depressing personal circumstances and think of God and praise His handiwork in nature, is surely remarkable.

Hut's second hymn is a Christmas song, but the text has been much changed in the usage it has experienced in various hymnals in Germany and Switzerland. The third hymn is a paraphrase in meter of Psalm 8. Neither of these two hymns has been incorporated in the *Ausbund*.

11. *Georg Grueenwald.* All our information concerning the life of this man is contained in the "Cronikel"[74] A shoemaker by trade, he became a missionary preacher travelling much in Tyrol where he was arrested and burned at the stake in 1530, in Kufstein, on the Inn river. He is the author of a hymn[75] which has found a place in nearly every German hymnal, Lutheran and Reformed, in many manuscripts of the Hutterites and in early Mennonite collections but not in the *Ausbund*.

The hymn, based on the passage, Matth. 11:28, is an invitation to come to Christ. The author knows full well that the acceptance of that invitation means reproach and suffering (4 and 5); life is short and fleeting (6); riches and learning avail not in death, and many are unprepared when death overtakes them (9 and 10); therefore an earnest exhortation to accept the invitation and to hold fast to Christ.

1. Kombt her zu mir, sagt Gottes Son,
All die ir seid beschweret nun
Mit Suenden fast beladen.
Ir Jungen, alten, Frau und Mann,
Ich will euch geben wz ich han,
Und heilen euren Schaden.

* * * *

"Come unto me," the Saviour pleads—
All you who heavy laden are
With sins that press upon you,
Ye young and old, husband and wife,
I give you freely as I can,
And heal all your shortcomings.

11. Darumb hoert, merckt, ir lieben Kind,
Die jetzund Gott ergeben seind,
Lasst euch der Mueh nit reuen.
Halt fest am heilig Gottes Wort,
Das sei euer Trost und hoechster Hort
Gott wird euch schon betreuen.

Now therefore, hark, you children dear,
Who trust in God for evermore;
Let not the toil repent you.
Hold fast to God's own holy Word,
May that your trusting refuge be,
God surely will prove faithful.

12. *The Passau-hymns — Hans Betz and Michael Schneider.* The origin of the Passau-hymns and the authorship of many of the songs, printed with the initials H. B. and M. S. as authors in the second part of the *Ausbund,* have been mentioned in the description of our sources. Wolkan's[76] very able contribution has not only given us the history of these hymns, but he has also identified the men from whom the greater number of these hymns emanated as Hans Betz and Michael Schneider. There are upwards of fifty songs in this collection and the majority of them bear the initials H. B. and M. S. The hymns, on the whole, make sad reading. A foreboding of death seems to run through them all coupled with resignation that God will not forsake them.

Hans Betz was one of these Passau prisoners and probably[77] perished after severe torture in this prison about 1537. The "Cronikel"[78] informs us that he was a weaver by trade, born at Eger, in Bavaria, a man of great natural gifts and a successful preacher among the Swiss Brethren. As a hymnist he is exceedingly fruitful,[79] but there is a monotonous sameness in his hymns and many are of excessive length—32, 38, and 46 stanzas respectively. Like many Anabaptist hymnists, he defends their doctrinal views. But the dominant strain in his hymns is sadness. He wants to be joyful, but he laments that for him and his brethren there is no place on earth they can call their home. The hand of everyone is raised against them. We quote a typical verse from "Nun wolt ich gerne singen."[80]

2. Mein Harff ist mir zerbrochen,
Dass sie nicht klingen will.
Was ich foercht hat mich troffen,
Meins Leydt ist worden vil.
Ich kann es nit vermeiden,
Gott bschleust mich also vil.
Darumb wil ich es leiden
Bis ich erreich das Ziel.

* * * *

My harp, it has been broken,
Its melody is gone.
Great fear has come upon me,

My sorrow has increased.
I cannot now escape it,
God wills the heavy load.
Therefore I shall endure it
Until I reach the goal.

Michael Schneider, like his colaborer, Hans Betz, probably perished in the prison at Passau, in Bavaria. Of his life little is known. The "Cronikel" of the Hutterites is silent because he had never identified himself with them, and but a few of his hymns have been used by them. Wackernagel[81] has collected ten of his hymns, taken from the *Ausbund*, under the initials "M. S."

There is less of the prison atmosphere in Schneider's hymns than in those of Betz. Among the distinctive views of the Swiss Brethren he makes mention only of the Lord's Supper. The Roman Church, he is assured, is Antichrist who has already appeared. The god of Antichrist is encased in the monstrance. And still Schneider is more of a mystic than any other of the Anabaptist hymn writers. He longs for a complete union with Christ, and, if suffering shall be a stepping stone toward that good, he is willing to suffer. Only he who dies to sin can live with Christ now and forever. To forgive one's enemies is the highest Christian virtue. We quote a stanza from a hymn entitled, *"Mich verlangt zu allen Zeiten."*[82]

4. Darumb, ihr Voelker allgemeine,
Ihr seid jung, alt, gross oder kleine,
Strebet darnach zu allen Zeiten,
Dass ihr hier mit Christo leiden,
Auch mit ihm sterben,
So werdt ihr mit erben,
So die andern muessen verderben.

* * * *

Therefore ye people everywhere,
Ye young and old and great and small,
Strive to attain to Jesus' way:
That all who suffer here with Christ
And with him die,
Shall be his heirs
When others perish in their sins.

13. *Peter Riedemann.* What Balthasar Hubmaier had been for the earliest years of the Anabaptist movement, that Riedemann was for the later. Born 1506 in Hirschberg, in Silesia, he came under Anabaptist influence in early youth and spent practically his entire life with the Hutterite Brethren group, gain-

ing a greater distinction for his unremitting servces as preacher, missionary, theologian, and hymn writer than any other of his co-laborers. The "Cronikel"[83] informs us that he spent nine years in various prisons, sometimes under an assumed name. He was the only one of the foremost leaders of the Hutterites who was allowed to die in peace, his death occurring in 1556, in Hungary. His greatest service to the cause of the Hutterite movement is his compendium of doctrines known as *"Rechenschaft des Glaubens"* which is still the doctrinal guide of his denomination.[84]

Riedemann's hymns, about 29 in number, are not found in the *Ausbund* nor in Wackernagel's collection of German hymns. They have been made accessible, however, by Wolkan[86] who prints a number of them in full. In their outward form, Riedemann's hymns show many rough edges, probably due to much transcription and private emendation; in range of subjects and facility of expression, they easily excel all other Hutterite hymns. Owing to the fact that many of them were composed in prison, it seems natural that they should testify of these unfortunate surroundings. There is, nevertheless, a strong current of joyful praise in many of the songs and a conscious submission to God's will which stamp the man as of heroic mould, a fine Christian character, tried and tested by adversity. A few examples of his verse must suffice. From hymn No. 13:[87]

Du bist der Herr und keiner mer
Darumb gehoert dir alle Eehr
Im Himmel und auff Erdten.
Die du durch deine grosse Macht
Aus Nichten hast herfuer gebracht,
Wie sie gesehen werden.
Die Sonn und Mond des Himels Heer,
Die Stern mit irem Scheine,
Die zaigen an dein grosse Eehr.

* * * *

Thou art the Lord, the only God!
To thee alone all praise belongs
On earth and in the heavens,
Which thou through thine almighty power
Out of nothing hast created,
As they are now before us.
The sun and moon, the heavenly hosts,
The stars with all their brightness shine,
They speak of thine great honor.

From hymn No. 19:[88]

In Glauben kein Mensch Gott gefelt,
Wie uns Paulus ein Zeuckhnus stelt,
Thuts den Ebreern schreiben.
Noch ist goettliche Lieb das best,
Dass sich kains andern dunckhen lest,
Es muess beynander bleiben.
* * * *
By faith alone God is not pleased,
As Paul affirms and witness bears
In letter to the Hebrews.
Yes, heavenly love is still the best,
With which none other can compare;
They must not be sep'rated.

14. *Hans (Haensel) Reiffer.* We know but little about the life of this man. Like Riedemann, he belonged to the Hutterites but had migrated northward into the Rhine valley. He was apprehended and jailed in Aachen (Aix la Chapelle), where in 1558 he was first strangled and then burned.[89] From the "Cronikel"[90] we learn that he had composed "vil hultseligen and geistlichen Lieder" of which Wolkan[91] has collected seven, all of them of great length, containing from 16 to 38 strophes. The contents of Reiffer's lyrics differ little from those of other Anabaptist singers. He raises his voice in warning against the sins of the so-called Christian world about him. He cries out against the city of Aachen and believes God will hold it responsible for the murders it is committing against peaceable and defenseless people. His trust in God shines through all his songs, but there is also a note of sadness which reminds one of the Lord's Gethsemane: not my will but thine be done!

We note a few strophes of Song No. 12:[92]

Aach, thue zu Hertzen nehmen,
Was du hast gfangen an,
Du wirst es noch erkennen,
Was du an uns hast tan,
Diesen Last nimermere
Wirstu bringen von dir
Du tuest denn vor dem Herren,
Buess mit grober Begier.
* * * *
O Aachen, do remember,
What thou hast aimed to do.
Sometime thou willt discover
What thou hast done to us.

This load now resting on thee,
Thou never canst cast off,
Unless in deep contrition
Thou bowst before the Lord.

Hast gfangen zwelff Personen
Zum grossen Schaden dein,
Schrecklich wird es dir gane
Und dir gar schwerlich sein,
Denn also sagt der Herre
Wol zu den Menschen schon,
Die in Gefencknus fieren,
Miessen ins Gfencknus gan.

* * * *

Twelve souls thou hast imprisoned
To thine own injury;
When reckoning day approacheth,
It will go hard with thee.
For thus the Lord hath spoken
To man, as well you know:
Who casts into the prison,
To prison self must go.

Hansen van Overdam.[93] The hymns of the Dutch Anabaptists, as we find them in "Het Offer des Herren", are all martyr songs, differing from one another only in narration of details, such as arrests, prison experiences, and manner of death. The hymn writer is usually an anonymous friend or relative of the martyr and intends his production to be a memorial to be read and perhaps also to be sung in the circle where the martyr was known. When the martyr himself composes a song, he frequently inserts his own name in the first stanza and his friends sometimes add a few concluding stanzas later.

The hymn of Hansen, a cheese merchant (Keescooper) in Ghent, is typical for the vast majority of Dutch hymns. He tells us that a group of believers was surprised at a private service, the men, including himself, arrested and brought before the magistrates on the charge of violating the Emperor's mandate against private religious gatherings. The men (number not given) were found guilty and burned at the stake, at Ghent, in 1550.

The hymn[94] has 21 stanzas, of which we quote two stanzas:

1. Ick weet, die Godes Woort bekent,
Dat hy ter werelt moet lijden.
Hans van Ouerdamme te Ghent
(Keescooper tot zijnder Zijden)
Die hebben sulex gheproeft seer wel
Met noch meer ander Vromen.

He who avows God's holy Word,
I know must greatly suffer,
This Hans of Overdam of Ghent,
(Chees merchant his employment)
With many other pious men,
Has proved beyond all question.

To the charge of disobeying the Emperor's mandate, Hansen's reply is the reply of the Apostles and primitive Christianity to organized and entrenched religious authority.[95]

"But Peter and John answered them: 'You must decide whether it is right in the sight of God to obey you instead of him, for we cannot help telling of what we have seen and heard.'" (Goodspeed's translation).

12. Ten is niet geoorloft zijn macht,
Sulcke Gheboden te maken;
Aldaer treet hy buyten de cracht
Van God verlient . . . .
Meer gelt ons der sielen Ghewin,
Dat wy met sin
Ghehoorsaem Gods gebot houven.

* * * *

'Tis not in the Emperor's might
To make such law 'gainst conscience.
He thereby oversteps the right
Which God to him entrusted.
For us 'tis more that we obey,
With conscience clear,
God's law and His commandments.

Is not this reply of Hansen the century-old plea for the God-given right of *Liberty of Conscience* for which men and women of heroic mould have freely given up their lives and their goods in order that future generations might come into possession of their right?

NOTES

1. Tacitus, *Germania,* Chapters II and III.
2. Kluge, Hermann, *Geschichte der deutschen National-Literatur,* p. 9.
3. "Dominus vobiscum" became "Dominik, wo bistu? Hinner der Kirch un flick Schu."
4. Koch, Eduard Emil, *Geschichte des Kirchenlieds,* Vol. 1, pp. 168-170.
5. Kurtz, Joh. Heinrich, *Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte,* Par. 61.
6. Julian, J., *Dictionary of Hymnology,* article "Sequences".
7. Koch, Eduard E. *Geschichte des Kirchenlieds,* Vol. 1, p. 174.
8. Winkworth, Catherine, *Christian Singers of Germany,* p. 28.
10. Keller, Ludwig, *Ein Apostel der Wt.* p. 4, note.
11. Keller, Ludwig, *Geschichte der Wt.* p. 4.
    Rembert, K., *Wt. im Herzogtum Juelich,* p. 551.
    Loserth, J., *Der Kommunismus der maehr. Wt.,* p. 224.
12. Horr, G. E., *The Baptist Heritage,* p. 10.
13. Goebel, Max, *Geschichte des christl. Lebens,* Vol. 1, p. 135.

14. Schaff, Ph., *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 7, p. 71.
15. Reasons for this rapid spread:
    Goebel, Max., *Geschichte der christl. Lebens*, Vol. 1, p. 139.
    Rembert, K., *Wt. im Herzogtum Juelich*, pp. 553-556.
    Zur Linden, O., *Melchior Hofmann*, p. 278.
    Starke, J. A., *Geschichte der Taufe*, p. 221.
    Loserth, J., *Balthasar Hubmair*, p. 3.
    Beck, J., *Geschichtsbuecher der Wt.*, p. 12.
16. Wolkan, R., *Die Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 50-56.
17. Beck, Joseph, *Geschichtsbuecher der Wt.*
    Wolkan, R., *Die Lieder der Wt.*
18. The modern spelling of the word is "Ausbund". In the 16th. century German it meant "pattern" or "sample". The meaning today is "rogue" or "madcap".
19. Wackernagel, Ph., *Das deutsche Kirchenlied*, Vol. 5, p. 677.
20. Wolkan, R., *Die Lieder der Wt.* pp. 27-42.
21. Rembert, K., *Wt. im Herzogtum Juelich*, p. 494.
22. Wolkan, R., *Die Lieder der Wiedertaeufer*, pp. 165-260. Berlin, 1903. B. Behrs Verlag.
23. For succinct account of his life and teaching: Dosker, H. E., *The Dutch Anabaptists*, pp. 53-56; *Real Encycl.*, V. 9, pp. 349-352.
24. Van Braaght, T., *Het bloedig Tooneel der doopsgezinden en weereloose Christenen, die om het Getuygenisse Jesu geleden hebben.* Amsterdam, 1660.
25. De Hoop Scheffer, *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*, 1870, pp. 45-89.
26. *Het Offer des Herren, de oudste Versameling Doopsgezinde Martelaarbriefen en Offerlieden.* 'S-Gravenhage, 1904. The volume is Vol. 2 of the monumental work entitled *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, in ten quarto volumes, and contains reprints of the most valuable documents of the early Reformation movement in the Low Countries. The editors, Dr. J. Cramer and Dr. F. Pyper, have greatly enriched these sources by illuminating introductions and explanatory notes and have put students of history under great obligation by their painstaking erudition.
27. *Das deutsche Kirchenlied*, Vol. 3, p. 439.
28. *Die Geschichtsbuecher der Wiedertaeufer*, Wien, 1883.
29. *Die Lieder der Wiedertaeufer*, Berlin, 1903.
30. Rembert, K., *Die Wt. im Herzogtum Juelich*, p. 490.
31. Wkl., *Kirchenlied*, 3, No. 1.
32. Translation, Schaff, Ph., *History of the Christian Church*, VI, 505.
33. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 122-140.
34. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, p. 172.
35. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, p. 107.
36. In his catalogue of Dutch and German hymns, Wolkan gives the titles of 772 hymns mentioned in his book on the songs of the Anabaptists and of this number 655 are in the German language. But the latter number includes the Hutterite hymns which never appeared in hymnals and were in all probability never extensively used.
37. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 244-246.
38. Kluge, H., *Von Luther bis Lessing.*
39. *Ausbund*, No. 1 (vs. 12), edit' of 1838. The hymn of Felix Manz (*Ausbund*, No. 6) has a couplet in verse 4 which is offensively vulgar in our day.
40. Wkl., *Kirchenlied*, 3, 440.
41. *Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 261-262.
42. *Geschichtsbuecher der Wt.*
43. *Wkl.* 3, No. 155; *Ausbund*, No. 40 (Edition of 1838 in all quotations).
44. Wolkan, *Lieder der Wt.*, 8.
45. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, No. 514, and *Ausbund*, No. 6.
46. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, p. 19.
47. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, Nos. 512 and 513; *Ausbund*, Nos. 5 and 30.
48. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 22-24, and *Wkl.*, 3, 455.
49. *Wkl.*, 3, Nos. 516 and 517; *Ausbund*, Nos. 34 and 11.
50. Wolkan, R., *Die Lieder der Wt.*, p. 9.

51. Keller, L., *Ein Apostel der Wt.*, pp. 5 and 11.
52. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 41-45.
53. *Het Offer des Herren*, pp. 62-67.
54. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, p. 26.
55. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, Nos. 405 and 520; *Ausbund*, Nos. 7 and 95.
56. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, p. 10.
57. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 9 and 10, 27-38.
58. Burrage, H. S., *Baptist Hymn Writers and Their Hymns*, p. 5.
59. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 59-61.
60. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, No. 523 and *Ausbund*, No. 31.
61. Loserth, Joh., *Balthasar Hubmaier und die Anfaenger der Wt. in Maehren.* Vedder, Henry C., *Balthasar Huebmaier.*
    Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 47-53.
62. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, No. 165.
63. Wolkan, R., *Die Lieder der Wt.*, p. 11.
64. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 60-63.
65. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 651-652.
66. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, No. 535; *Ausbund*, No. 32.
67. Wolkan, *Die Lieder der Wt.*, p. 12.
68. Beck, J. *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 33-34.
    Keller, L., *Ein Apostel der Wt.*, p. 211.
69. Herzog, *Real Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, pp. 325-329.
70. Keller, L., *Die Reformation und die aelteren Reformsparteien*, 433. an. 1.
71. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, Nos. 536, 537, 538.
72. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 34-35.
    Wkl., Vol. 3, 445.
73. *Wkl.*, Vol. 3, Nos. 508, 509, 510.
    Ausbund, No. 8.
74. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, p. 104.
    Wkl., 3, pp. 128-133.
75. *Wkl.*, 3, No. 166.
76. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 27-42.
77. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, p. 32, note.
78. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, p. 132.
79. *Wkl.*, 5, 1040-1056. (12 of these 16 songs belong to Hans Betz and not to Hans Buechel.)
80. *Wkl.*, 5, No. 1040.
81. *Wkl.*, 3, No. 520; 5, Nos. 1057-1065.
82. *Wkl.*, 5, No. 1060; *Ausbund*, No. 93.
83. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, pp. 40 and 206-207.
84. Enz, Joh., *Rechenschaft*, 1902.
86. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 185-206.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 196.
88. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, p. 200.
89. Rembert, R., *Wt. im Herzogtum Juelich*, p. 491.
90. Beck, J., *G. B. Wt.*, p. 233.
91. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, pp. 213-227.
92. Wolkan, R., *Lieder der Wt.*, p. 219.
93. Van Braagt, T., *Het bloedig Tooneel*, p. 89.
94. *Het Offer des Herren*, pp. 117-120.
95. Acts 4:19-20.
    Wkl., Das deutsche Kirchenlied, Vol. 5, No. 1079.

CONRAD GREBEL AS A HUMANIST

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Conrad Grebel of Zurich lived in a very stirring epoch, in a time of intense activity that was destined to affect profoundly the subsequent current of history and of Western life. For it was during the first quarter of the sixteenth century, while Conrad was growing to manhood, that the forces of revolt in northern Europe came to a head in what is known as the Protestant Reformation. Behind this crisis there were numerous causes near and remote which cannot be discussed here. Among these causes the Revival of Learning was indubitably one of the foremost. And closely connected with the Revival of Learning was the significant movement of thought known as Humanism.

Humanism in a broad sense signifies the cultivation of the human spirit for its own sake. For many centuries together the individual man and woman had been largely ignored by philosophy, had been completely over-shadowed by the imposing institutions of church and society. Humanism by way of contrast reasserted the essential dignity and the innate worth of the individual human being. Human individuality was given a fresh emphasis.[1] Individual thought and individual enjoyment, personal responsibility, freedom and activity came in for a new and long-neglected evaluation. Authority, philosophical and ecclesiastical, was subjected to thorough-going criticism. The new viewpoint met strong opposition at the hands of the defenders of the established philosophies and its triumph was not always made peaceably.

The new spirit first asserted itself in Italy, beginning with Francesco Petrarca, in the fourteenth century. Only slowly in the fifteenth century did it spread across the Alps into France and into the German-speaking lands. The unhappy extremes to which the new philosophy was sometimes carried by the Italian humanists in the first thrill of their discovery had gradually been tempered by an increasing attention to serious study and to sound learning. The staid temperament of the German character also lent its weight to the stability of the new learning and when by this time scholarship was being more and more bestowed upon Biblical studies, particularly by such men as Johann Reuchlin,

1. A full characterization of Humanism is to be found in the excellent work by G. Voigt: *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums, oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus,* 3te Aufl., Berlin, 1893; Vol. I, pp. 4-10.

Erasmus of Rotterdam and Ulrich Zwingli, there was brought about a salutary combination of religion and humanism which found its ideal in the primitive Christianity of the New Testament.[2]

In the cantons of the Swiss Confederacy the humanistic spirit was already at work at the opening of the sixteenth century. The higher schools at Bern and Basel were the ones nearest at hand for Swiss students. The new learning had made but little progress in these places when the century opened. For a number of decades following 1500 it was the fashion for young students of Switzerland to proceed to the larger and more influential universities of Europe for their higher education. Among the ones attended were some in southern Germany and in northern Italy and those at Paris and Vienna. The imperial university at Vienna became a center of the new learning at about the beginning of the century and attracted large numbers of students from near and far, the number in attendance being sometimes as high as seven thousand. During the years from 1500 to 1518 at least 141 Swiss students were enrolled there, perhaps about one third of all those who studied abroad during these years.[3] Some were helped to their study there by imperial stipends; among these was Grebel.

Conrad Grebel was born of a good family of Zurich and came to manhood just at the time when this stream of humanistic influence was well at the flood in Switzerland. His father, Jakob Grebel, was an influential man in civil and political life. He was able to secure for his promising son imperial and royal stipends which enabled him to study successively at Vienna and Paris. Conrad is constantly spoken of by his friends and teachers as a young man of brilliant intellect, of upright character and of great ability.[4]

Of Grebel's early life and education little or nothing is known to us. Following the elementary and preparatory education received in his homeland he proceeded to the universities for his further training. At Basel he matriculated in the autumn of 1514 and the next year at Vienna. From here he went to Paris in 1518. From the first he seems to have thrown himself enthusiastically into the pursuit of the new humanistic studies. Although very

2. A full discussion by F. von Bezold: *Geschichte der deutschen Reformation,* Berlin, 1890; p. 208 ff.
3. The number of Swiss students who studied in various higher schools from 1500-1518 is given by E. Egli: *Schweizerische Reformationsgeschichte,* I, p. 26.
4. So, for example, Peter Tschudi in a letter to Vadianus, June 20, 1520; Kaspar Ursinus to the same, October 1, 1521.

brilliant intellectually, he apparently did not go through with a definite program of studies that might have disciplined his mental powers most effectively. He studied the ancient languages and their literatures in a manner which, while it was intensive, was probably desultory and unsystematic. He sought to live or experience life to the full, according to the common ideal of humanism. Even after six years of study at three universities he had received no academic degree.[5] Like other humanists, Grebel desired an opportunity for study in Italy, the fountain head of the new learning, for advancing his mastery of belles-lettres (To Myconius, July 18, 1519). This wish was never realized.

At Vienna Grebel came under the dominant influence of Joachim Vadianus, a Swiss professor in the university. This man exerted a profound influence over his younger compatriot with the result that the two became lifelong friends. It appears that a group of Swiss students devoted to the cultivation of the Muses were gathered about Vadianus in a selected circle with something of the atmosphere of a Platonic Academy. Grebel even lived with Vadianus, perhaps as a personal attendant or an assistant in his literary labors.[6] A thorough-going humanist, Vadianus was an adept in the classical Latin authors. With the help of his circle of students he edited and annotated the works of various ancient authors. Among these his last and greatest work was a commentary on the ancient geographical treatise written by Pomponius Mela in the first century of the Christian era. Grebel himself had a keen interest in this particular work. Among the poetic effusions prefaced to the first edition, which appeared in 1518, is a Latin poem of thirty lines by him in the form of a spirited address to Mela. For the second edition, produced in 1521, he wrote a scholarly introduction addressed "to the gentle reader".[7]

Another teacher of Grebel was Henricus Glareanus, also a

5. The only statement Grebel makes about a degree is in the earliest extant letter (September 8, 1517): "In artibus liberalibus, quas septem vocant, nullam lauream, sed hoc meo suadente genio, aut tuli aut unquam feram". It is not clear whether by this he means that he is unable or unwilling to proceed to a degree. There was on the part of some humanists, who were interested in sound learning and scholarship, a healthy contempt for university degrees and honors which in their mind stood for the idle sophistry of the traditional university course. Expressions of this attitude are found in letters of V. Tschudi to Zwingli, June 21, 1518; Glareanus to Zwingli, January 13, 1519; Erasmus to Anne of Borsselen, January 27, 1501.
6. See M. Staub: *Die Beziehungen des Taeufers Conrad Grebel zu seinem Schwager Vadian*, Zurich, 1895; especially pp. 8-15.
7. The two items were published in translation, the poem also in the original Latin (with a few errors), in *Goshen College Record Review Supplement*, May-June, 1926, pp. 49-61.

Swiss humanist. Just how much Grebel was permanently influenced by Glareanus it is difficult to say, but it was probably considerable. Their first acquaintance was doubtless in 1514, when Grebel studied at Basel, where Glareanus was at that time. In 1517, almost at once after Glareanus set up as a teacher at Paris, Grebel writes (to Zwingli, September 8, 1517) from Vienna expressing his hope of studying at Paris with Glareanus. He clearly felt that Vadianus would not be of much further help to himself in the line of study in which he was interested, for this scholar had turned his attention to the study of medicine and was also planning to return to his homeland. Little more than a year later Grebel finds himself at Paris, welcomed by Glareanus into his circle of pupils. He is elected at once to a position in the miniature Roman Republic into which Glareanus always organized his students. They lived together on the boarding-school plan. Here Grebel took up his study of the Greek authors in earnest. But Grebel and his teacher did not get along well together, perhaps because of natural incompatibility, and within a few months they parted for a time. Glareanus is generally spoken of as a man of Christian character and a strict moralist.[8] Grebel seems to have contracted some evil habits while at Vienna and now offended his teacher on different occasions by his conduct.

After the rupture with Glareanus he attended the lectures of other professors at Paris. Those whom he specifically mentions in the Letters are Nicholas Beraldus and William Budaeus. The former was a native of Orleans who lived in Paris after 1512, where he was very active as a teacher and as an editor of ancient texts. His sympathies were with the humanists and with freedom of thought. Budaeus, the greatest French classical scholar of his day, rivalled Erasmus in his erudition. He wrote both Greek and Latin with facility, the former even better than the latter. Some of his surviving correspondence is in Greek.

Upon returning from Paris to his home city in 1520, Grebel almost at once came under the influence of Zwingli, who for more than a year already had been preaching the doctrines of evangelical reform. The friendship of the two men had begun years before, but was never intimate until this time. Zwingli, previously eminent as a scholar and humanist, was just now entering upon

8. Especially instructive are the testimonials by Erasmus in letters: to Urban Regius, March 7, 1515-6; to Stephen Poncher, February 14, 1516-7.

his work as a reformer. Grebel was one of a group of young men whe read the philosopher Plato with Zwingli as late as November 1521 (To Myconius, November 4, 1521.) After his conversion in 1522, Grebel joined enthusiastically in the work of religious reform in Zurich. He continued to cooperate with Zwingli until he saw that the latter would not make his reform radical enough to suit himself, and after 1523 he became one of the foremost leaders of the group known as Anabaptists.

In the circle of Grebel's friends and acquaintances were included many of the most prominent humanistic scholars of Switzerland. Besides Zwingli, there was Oswald Myconius, schoolmaster at Zurich and Lucerne, a devout and conscientious scholar with whom Grebel was long in correspondence; Valentine Tschudi of Glarus; John James Amman and Rudolph Zumbuehl of Zurich; John Xylotectus of Lucerne. There is no direct evidence in Grebel's Letters that he know personally or was definitely influenced by the first of all German humanists, Erasmus of Rotterdam. In 1514, when Grebel first matriculated at Basel, Erasmus was spending a few months in that city, supervising the printing in Froben's press of some of his books. It may be a safe inference that Grebel saw the great scholar. His close friends, Zwingli, Glareanus and Myconius were all among the correspondents of Erasmus. He refers occasionally to writings of Erasmus and to his movements, so that there is reason to believe that he kept in touch with the great humanist's activities.

Of interest in studying Conrad Grebel as a humanist is the matter of his moral life and his ethical principles. It is notorious that individual humanists sometimes, in discarding old religious sanctions and in their eager devotion to Greek and Roman antiquities, admired and imitated not only the virtues of the ancient pagans, but their vices as well. It needs to be said that on the whole the German humanists were more free from the pagan outlook upon life than the Italians. So far as can be gathered from his Letters, Grebel was not a pagan humanist.[9] While a casual reading of the Letters does suggest a pagan outlook upon life, this was superficial and conventional with him. He doubtless experimented fully with life, according to the humanist ideal, but it is clear that he never lived life with the reckless abandon of an Ulrich von Hutten, for example. In letters to Vadianus, his close

9. With this agres C. Neff: *Gedenkschrift zum 400-jaehrigen Jubilaeum der Mennoniten oder Taufgesinnten, 1525-1925*, page 71, whereas M. Staub (*op. cit.*, pp. 23, 27, 28) inclines to the opposite view.

friend and personal physician, he confesses to evil conduct, but he does so with the utmost sense of shame and chagrin. Grebel's ethical standard is well revealed by the numerous references in his Letters to the matter of his father's acceptance of money pensions from foreign kings and princes.

For a long time Swiss soldiers had been fighting as mercenaries in the service of foreign potentates. This practice, which brought much wealth into the country, had the two-fold result of undermining the economic status of the cantons and, worst of all, it debased thoroughly the aristocracy, so much so that their political influence was often for sale to the highest foreign bidder.[10] This mercenary spirit with its attendant evils was a humiliating blight upon their fair land in the eyes of the Swiss humanists. Many like Conrad Grebel set their hopes for a better day in their national life upon the progress of the new learning.[11] Certainly this extensive political corruption, through the general unrest which it fomented, prepared the ground for the rapid progress of the evangelical reform movement which followed after 1520 in Switzerland[12]. The elder Grebel was among those who accepted and favored the acceptance of foreign pensions, even after it had been strictly forbidden by edict. His position ultimately led to his execution as a traitor.

Conrad was not in sympathy with his father on the matter of the pensions and apparently he opposed it on the basis of conscience and ethical principles. In letters to Vadianus (January 14, 1520; February 1, 1521) he complains bitterly against his father on this matter, even though his opportunity for study at Paris had depended upon a pension from the French king, Francis I. Later, in 1521, Grebel after hesitating long refused a papal stipend for study at Pisa. His scruples were doubtless sincere, especially in view of the fact that he had for years already cherished the fond ambition of studying in Italy.

The sentiment of loyalty and patriotism to home and native land was a characteristic of the Swiss humanists. They were proud of the military glory of Helvetia which reached back even

10. For extended accounts see E. Egli (*Op. cit.*) pp. 7, 8; W. Oeshcli, *History of Switzerland, 1499-1914 (Cambridge History Series)*, 1903, p. 60 ff. The venality of the Swiss was well nigh proverbial. Compare the remark of Erasmus to William Warham, March 5, 1518: "Non fugit omnino res hec Eluetios, licet crassos; sed ubique plurimum valet pecunia".

11. For example, Zwingli in letters to Myconius, July 24, 1520, and to B. Haller, December 29, 1521.

12. K. Daendliker, *A Short History of Switzerland* (tr.), London, 1899, page 129.

to the time of their conflict with Julius Caesar in 58 B. C. They likewise resented keenly any attempts on the part of contemporary writers to disparage Swiss greatness or discredit Swiss independence. As an illustration, Grebel writes (September 8, 1517) from Vienna of a treatise[13] by one Jakob Wimpheling, which in some way wounded Swiss pride, stating that he and his friends at the university had bought up the whole edition in order to forestall further injury to their country's fair repute. He has hard things to say of all who seek to besmirch the glory of Helvetia.

Akin to Grebel's patriotic pride was his interest in the scientific study of geography. The period in which he lived was a time of eager interest on the part of scholars in the study of the new science of geography, a subject that alike stirred the imagination of students and spurred on hardy adventurers and explorers to brave unknown dangers in far parts of the earth. As stated before, Grebel assisted Vadianus in the publication of his two editions of the ancient geography of Pomponius Mela. Glareanus, the other important teacher of Grebel, was an authority of the first rank on scientific geography in his time and country. He produced a treatise on Swiss geography, a description of Helvetia, which was highly prized in Switzerland. To this work Oswald Myconius, close friend of Grebel, wrote a commentary of some value. In this connection there is real significance to the scientific expedition of discovery made to the top of Mt. Pilatus, near Lucerne, in August 1520 by Vadianus, Grebel, Myconius and Xylotectus. This expedition, which is reputed to have been the first scientific mountain climbing expedition in Switzerland, is described by Vadianus in his second edition (1522) of Mela.

Another major interest among this circle of Swiss humanists was pacifism. In view of the base mercenary spirit that dominated the political and military affairs of the Swiss cantons, it is not a matter of surprise that the humanists who were opposed to this whole system became interested in pacifism. They did so perhaps as a matter of policy, but more likely from principle, drawing inspiration from the teachings of the New Testament. Grebel upon his return to Zurich in 1520 read a pacifistic manuscript entitled *Philirenum* which was written by Myconius and circulated privately among friends. He evidently received it from Zwingli. Great was his delight with it and he expressed the hope that it may be published some time (to Vadianus, August

13. *Soliloquium pro pace Christianorum et pro Helvetiis ut resipiscant* (1520).

3, 1520). But it was never put into print. Although it seems to have drawn heavily upon the *Querela Pacis* of Erasmus, for some reasons other members of the humanistic circle discouraged its publication.[14] Further investigation could well be made of this early peace propaganda among the Swiss humanists in an effort to discover its specific teachings and principles and its share in the development of the non-resistant principles of the Anabaptists of later date.

Of Grebel's religious ideas and of his philosophy of life or *Weltanschauung* during his youthful years, before his conversion to evangelical Christianity, it is difficult to form a clear idea. Naturally, at this age he would not as yet have these ideas clearly formulated. As already said, he can hardly be called a pagan humanist. What paganism he possessed was merely a conventional crust over a conscientious soul. While he as yet had given little serious thought to religion, it is very evident that he was by nature deeply religious. The indirect proof that this is true of him is to be found in the language and the concepts of his earlier and pre-conversion letters. In interpreting the language of his letters, however, due allowance needs to be made for the rhetoric of the epistolary style and for his pessimistic outlook upon life. Formal letters are always more or less conventional, the language is special and the view afforded of a man's character is partial and one-sided.

If we may give any credence to his early letters, Grebel experienced more troubles and difficulties, perhaps, than most young men do. Ill health was constantly causing him much suffering; certain youthful indiscretions seem to have gotten him into trouble repeatedly, and finally, there hung over him like a cloud the unhappy circumstances of his home life. Some of these troubles were doubtless magnified in his own eyes out of all proportion to their real greatness. Still the fact remains that to him they were very real troubles and he was seeking to formulate a philosophy to live by. Some of the outlines of his philosophy can be traced.

One striking feature noticeable especially in the early Letters is his complaining attitude. Strange as it may seem he does not hesitate to ascribe all his misfortunes in a fatalistic manner to the ill will of *Fortuna*, who, he says, treats him like a step-mother, or to the displeasure of the fates or of his own evil genius or some-

14. Some of the movements of this manuscript can be traced in the Zwinglian correspondence. See in *Zwinglis Briefwechsel* by E. Egli, Nos. 102, 104, 105, 107, 133. Very important is Egli's discussion on No. 105 (note 2) and No. 107 (note 8).

times of "the gods", quite in the fashion of an ancient Roman. He mentions "gods and goddesses" (*dii deaeque*) frequently in asseverations and in forms of self-imprecation and of congratulation. In the forty-seven pre-conversion letters the fates (*fata, dirae*) are referred to at least eight times and the unfriendly *Fortuna* about twice as often. To the Deity he refers with the plural words *dii, deae* twenty-six times; with the singular about fifteen times, most often in the form *deus optimus maximus*. It is significant that he uses the more pagan form "gods" most in the very early letters, while *deus optimus maximus* predominates in the later letters of the humanistic period, especially in 1521 when he had already come under the influence of Zwingli. His religious conversion took place in 1522, after which the phraseology, the allusions and the outlook of his letters are all very distinctly Biblical.

Other indications of Grebel's early religious concepts come out incidentally in the Letters. Twice he refers to prayer, implying his belief in the same. He believed that there is a divine power which can and does give help to human beings, so, for example, in illness and in difficult circumstances. Being of a gloomy disposition, the prospect of death was often vividly before him, due to his ill health and the successive waves of plague in Europe which swept away many thousands all about him. Death he looked upon as the prospective release from troubles and in the future life he feels men will be rewarded for their deeds according to God's mercy. Very interesting is his letter to Vadianus (December 29, 1521) proffering sympathy and consolation over the death of his brother Melchior. He calls upon his friend to take his grief "philosophically", and then proceeds to give the several points of the philosophy he has in mind, as follows: it cannot be helped now; he was born to die sometime; he died still young and unspoiled; he is gone to where all men must go; your loss is not eternal; it seemed best so to God; see that you act like a Christian.. The name of Jesus Christ he mentions only twice in these early letters and one of these is very significant. In all seriousness apparently, as he contemplates the uncertainty of his future path he writes to Vadianus (January 14, 1520): "When therefore you may look for me (at home) I shall not rashly predict. What would happen if never again my way would be open to Helvetia or if I were to meet my death; what would happen after I am dead will not concern me in the least. Although I do not call for death, still I do not shrink from it, if it comes to me

prepared to meet Christ (ad Christum praeparato), me to whom so many things have happened, besides the ones I have mentioned, that I could by no means pray the gods (*sic!*) for a longer life."

Once Grebel makes the bare suggestion of taking up the monastic life as an escape from the tragedies of life. While argument from silence is generally unsafe, still it is worth noting that there is scarcely a hint in Grebel's Letters of the sophisticated attitude of rationalism or of skepticism toward religion. Among the humanists there were some avowed rationalists who rejected revealed religion and mocked at Christianity.[15] From this attitude Grebel was free. There is also only a little in the Letters of ridicule aimed at the ignorant and bigoted monks and priests of the time. Such ridicule was a favorite diversion among many humanists. We know that Grebel did read with a relish literature that issued from the conflict between humanists and monks. This can be inferred from casual references to some of Erasmus' writings and to the matter of Erasmus' conflict with the theologians at Louvain in 1519 (Letters, October 26, 1518; October 6, 1519).

The literary style of Grebel's Latin letters compares favorably with that of other humanists of the same period, whose correspondence has survived. The language used in the higher schools of the time and by scholars generally was Latin. Latin was also the usual medium of correspondence among the educated. It was, moreover, a Latin style modelled after the classical authors of ancient Rome, whose works the humanists assiduously studied and imitated. Their written Latin, while still far removed in power and purity from that written by Cicero and Livy, was nevertheless much superior in quality to the miserable *Moenchslatein* of their time, which is so brilliantly satirized in the *Epistles of Obscure Men.*

In general, Grebel's Latin style seems labored and heavy. It does not flow along with the ease and the graceful clearness which characterize the style, for example, of Erasmus or even of Zwingli. His thought is sometimes vague, grammatical irregularities appear rarely, mostly when he writes under emotional stress or is seeking to compose with special elegance or profuseness. Verbosity is a fault of his earlier letters. The use of repeated negatives, affirming a point by denying its opposite and vice versa, while a common feature of humanistic Latin, is almost an obsession with Grebel, so much so that a few times his accumulations of nega-

15. Further details are given in Bezold, *Geschichte der deutschen Reformation,* pp. 224-226.

tive words result in confusion, as when he writes describing Glareanus (To Vadianus, April 13, 1520): "nec speres qui sui dissimilis esse nequeat, hoc est, qui non noverit animum, qualis est, dissimulare". His excessive use of superlative expressions is quite in keeping with humanistic practice.

The artificial quality of his Latin style is further due to the copious use of rhetorical devices of divers sorts. These feats of rhetoric are most evident in the earliest letters to Vadianus, although some became a permanent part of the man and his style of writing. He was fond of playing upon words, often in a jocular vein. Some of his word plays are pleasing enough while others seem rather forced and inept. Typical examples are: "quae mea est fortuna vel morum parvitas (pravitas dicere volui)", (April 8, 1521; "Miconio, viro plane docto integroque Lucernaeque suae claro lumini", (October 26, 1518). Of the Swiss humanists, Glareanus shows a like fondness for word plays, but he does not use them with the frequency that Grebel does.

In Grebel's Letters parallel clauses are often found artificially balanced in structure and word order. Chiasmus, a rhetorical figure, is frequently used, as for example in the phrase: "desideratissime praeceptorum affiniumque observatissime", (July 29, 1520). The words of a phrase are sometimes unnaturally interlocked for prose writing, as: "barbarus barbaro iuvenis coaevo", (July 13, 1520). The repetition of emphatic words is an effective device that is not often carried to undue extremes by Grebel; so, for example, in the letter to Vadianus of October 6, 1519, *debebam* and *debebat* are used six times in as many lines, every time forcefully at the beginning of a clause or sentence. An example of rhetorical repetition carried to an absurd length is the following line from the letter of November 7, 1520: "O me, cui ad miseriam miseram misere miserrimo (miserere!) nihil desit".

A curious example of an entire letter that is throughout greatly overwrought with rhetoric is the message of condolence Grebel wrote to Vadianus (January 4, 1521) upon his father's death. In this brief letter of fifty-four lines, while offering consolation and at the same time exploiting his own griefs and troubles, the writer has contrived to employ the word for "grieve" (*dolere*, once the noun form *dolor*) seventy-seven times. The most often repeated form is *dolet*, and by the time the letter draws to its close, this word has not only become terribly monotonous but it sounds like the echo of despair from the writer's own soul. The same letter contains also numerous word plays, alliterations and repetitions.

What is possibly the most elaborate illustration of Grebel's ability in circumlocution is found in this same letter. Near the end the writer wants to say that he is sorry that he has had no letter from Vadianus. This simple thought he gets expressed in the course of eight lines of vague allusions and elusive suggestions, some of which resists translation into proper English, as follows: "Dolet, quod succus quidem rebus, fortunis, amicis meis concolor; dolet, quod anserinum quiddam oblongulum; dolet, quod Niloticum quiddam tam carus est in urbe vestra, tam nullius rei indigente. Dolet, quod quiddam his longe carius est. Quid hoc carius sit, quaeris? Est dictio monosyllaba, a quo, si diminitivum fictum faceres, fieret illud, quo homines fiunt, fieret columna custodis hortorum. Dolet, non quod dictio monosyllaba tam cara sit, sed quod id tam carum sit, quod dictio monosyllaba continet". Briefly paraphrased this is: I am sorry that ink, pen and paper are so dear in your city which is so well supplied with everything. There is something still dearer, and that is your mind, or rather the thoughts your mind contains.

One striking feature of Grebel's style is the profusion of classical and literary allusions found in all his letters, excepting some short ones that were written in haste. Weighting down composition with an abundance of classical lore was a characteristic of much of the mediaeval rhetoric and poetic. Many phrases and allusions became conventional and served as universal literary coin. The humanists in the study of the ancient authors plucked many fresh posies for use in their writings. So great was the demand from students everywhere for a handbook of such proverbs, allusions and choice classical phrases that Erasmus found sale for repeated and enlarged editions of his *Adagia* from the years 1500 to 1515. The great wealth of proverbial phrases, mythical allusions and classical reminiscences in Grebel's Letters doubtless owed something to such standard collections as the *Adagia*. A close examination, however, shows that he uses many such allusions which are not listed in the *Adagia* of Erasmus. The conclusion seems justified that he was himself so well read in the ancient Greek and Latin classics that his own style of writing was distinctly colored thereby. It is in part possible from the references and allusions in the Letters to infer what were the particular authors he was studying at different times. How his diction was immediately colored by his current studies is strikingly illustrated by the great abundance of Scripture phrases and

allusions that appear in the letters he wrote after his conversion to evangelical Christianity.

Generally his employment of literary allusions is tastefully and effectively done. There are exceptions, for sometimes they seem strained and unnatural. Compared with the letters of other humanists of the same time and region, Grebel brings in such allusions more frequently than others. Page for page on the average, he uses several times as many as Erasmus, Zwingli or Myconius. Glareanus approaches nearest in the frequency and in the general type of their usage. The general impression that one carries away from a close study of his Letters is that, while he possessed great erudition, he was not endowed with any exceptional creative ability.

Of the ancient authors, Grebel nowhere expresses favoritism for any particular ones. To judge from those which he mentions casually and from the frequency of citation and allusion, it appears that Homer and Vergil were among his favorites. There is good evidence in the Letters that he also knew well Horace, Cicero, Livy, Catullus, Pliny the Elder, Juvenal, Plato, Lucian and the Greek Anthology. It is easily possible that he knew at first hand all the important and many of the lesser Greek and Latin authors.

Grebel must have possessed what was for his time a very good personal library, including classics and contemporary works. He frequently speaks with concern of his books. In 1518 he had left Vienna unexpectedly and in haste and afterwards he experienced some difficulty in getting the books he left behind at the time transported to his home. He speaks of this matter several times in letters, showing that he was uneasy about it. Again, when he returned from Paris, his shipment of books from that place did not reach Zurich until some time after he did. He was greatly interested in acquiring a library. More than sixty titles and authors are specifically mentioned in the Letters, and it is safe to assume that these constitute only a fraction of his collection of books. In his last letter that we have, when he is harassed by debts and had been proscribed from Zurich for his religious faith, he writes to a book-dealer, perhaps Andreas Castelberger, sends him also a list or "catalogue" of all his books and rather urgently presses him to find purchasers for the books.[16] If this plan was

16. This letter was published with translations and notes in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, July, 1927.

carried out, the library was undoubtedly scattered out and cannot be recovered. Only a few volumes are known to be in existence today in libraries at Zurich. Search could profitably be made in the libraries of Switzerland for any other books from Grebel's personal library that might still be in existence. The marginal notations found in the few volumes that are extant suggest the possible value of any others that still chance to exist. Perhaps the "catalogue" mentioned in his last letter is still in existence somewhere. Its discovery would give added light on Grebel as a humanist.

Like many another humanist, Conrad Grebel felt constrained to try his hand at writing verse. There are left from his hand a total of 152 lines of verse in Latin and Greek, written in two well known classical meters. One hundred lines are in the form of elegiac couplets, of which the first line is a dactylic hexameter and the second line is a so-called pentameter. This form of verse was brought to its highest perfection in Latin by the poet Ovid and became a favorite meter in later times for all kinds of occasional verse as well as for special efforts. For the school boy the elegiac meter was the easiest to be mastered and the first to be learned. Only three of Grebel's distichs are in Greek, the rest are in Latin. Most of these lines occur as shorter and longer postscripts to various letters, which fact accounts for their preservation. These postscripts are often informal and epigrammatic in tone expressing playful and fanciful ideas. Included in the elegiac lines is one special poem of thirty lines referred to before, a rather florid address to the geographer Pomponius Mela. The elegiac meter he used exclusively in his earlier verse writing efforts. The one special poem dates from 1518 and the remaining lines in this meter are all from 1520 and after his return to Zurich.

His other fifty-two lines of verse are written in the Phalaecean meter, otherwise called hendecasyllabic. These lines are all from the years 1521-1522. All occur as postscripts to letters excepting a short poem which is appended to Zwingli's *Apologeticus Archeteles* of August 23, 1522. In this poem Grebel expresses vigorously his sympathy with the movement for religious reform and his dislike for pope and bishops. Grebel's versification is always very accurate, often so at the price of harsh elisions and strange collocations of words. Most of the lines, while being passably good verses, must be adjudged poor poetry. Verse writing together with extensive reading in the classics seem to have been his

principal occupation for a year and a half or more after his return from Paris.

After his conversion to evangelical Christianity, Grebel became entirely absorbed in his new interest, and especially in the study of the Christian Scriptures. The tone and outlook in his Letters after that event become very markedly different. He later became a leading spirit in the radical reform party at Zurich called the Anabaptists. The question of how much Grebel's humanistic ideals, his humanistic training and his humanistic outlook upon life contributed to or was finally responsible for his position on religious reform is not easy to answer. It is important to remember that other leaders within the Anabaptist group had also previously received the humanistic training. Notable among these were Hans Denk, Felix Manz, Balthasar Hubmaier, Johannes Campanus and Dirk Philips. K. Vos has shown[17] that the theological views held by the Anabaptists of the Netherlands owed much to the writings of Erasmus, the great humanist and scholar. In the same connection C. Neff has pointed out some of the lines of influence from Erasmus that apparently contributed to Anabaptism in South Germany and Switzerland. This writer especially feels that Hans Denk was decidedly influenced by Erasmus, but also gives it as his conviction that this whole matter deserves a more thorough and complete investigation. The brief sketch given above of Conrad Grebel as a humanist suggests further that the whole matter of the actual and probable influence which the spirit of humanism had upon the aim and ideals of the radical reform groups in different parts of Europe deserves more careful and extended study than has yet been given to it.

17. *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, I, page 600.

THE FIRST EDITION OF THE AUSBUND

Harold S. Bender

For long years students of Anabaptist History have searched for a copy of the first edition of the earliest Anabaptist hymnal, known in its later editions as the *Ausbund*. The earliest dated edition extant was that of 1583, consisting of two wholly independent parts. Dr. A. J. Ramaker, in his article in this issue, *Hymns and Hymn Writers of the Anabaptists in the 16th Century* states that there were two earlier editions in 1565 and 1569, but that no copy of either has been brought to light. He draws his information from Wackernagel, *Geschichte des Deutschen Kirchenlied*. Rudolf Wolkan in his *Lieder der Wiedertaeufer* (1903), knew of no edition earlier than that of 1583, of which he possessed a copy, another being in the State Library in Dresden. However, he concludes that the *Ausbund* was completed between January 24, 1570, and May, 1571, since it was mentioned in the *Frankenthaler Gespraech* of 1571, June, yet contained a hymn concerning a martyr who died on January 24, 1570. This conclusion of Wolkan however needs revision. It is altogether possible that the two parts were collected at different times and brought together first in 1853. That this was probably the case is proven by a recently discovered volume, a 1564 edition of the second part of Wolkan's 1583 *Ausbund*. By chance, altogether unexpected, a copy of this edition was found and secured in August, 1928, by the writer. It was in possession of James Lewis Hook, an antiquarian book dealer in Harrisburg, Pa., U.S.A. Mr. Hook could tell nothing of its provenance, except that it was merely one of a number of old and apparently unimportant German books which he secured from a farm home in the vicinity of Harrisburg, Pa. The copy is now in the Mennonite Historical Library of Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana. A brief description of the book and its contents follows.

Unfortunately this copy of the earliest known edition of the *Ausbund* is no longer in its original form and binding. It forms the second half of a "Sammelband" measuring 10½ x 16 cm., the first part of which consists of anonymous and possibly nondescript non-Anabaptist hymns of the early 18th century. From the appearance of the binding and the first part, one might estimate the date at which the book was bound at about 1720, probably in Europe. No doubt the book was brought to Pennsylvania by some early Mennonite settler. However, the *Ausbund* section was not quite so long as the first part of the book so that small

strips of paper were carefully trimmed and pasted to the bottoms of the pages in order to fill out the vacant space and make a neat binding possible. The original size of the *Ausbund* page was 9x16 centimeters.

As found, the volume is complete and perfect. It contains one hundred nineteen (119) numbered folios, beginning with the title page, and in addition one folio containing the table of contents, a total of 240 pages including title page and contents pages. However the numbering does not begin until the fifth folio, which is the second page of the first hymn. This hymn, strangely, begins on the verso of folio four. The collation of the copy is as follows: title page with blank verso, "Vorred," of three pages, hymns beginning on the verso of folio four and continuing to the recto of folio 119, at the bottom of which stands the word "Ende", "Beschlusz" on the verso of folio 119 (in meter), "Register oder Zayger diser geistlichen Lieder und Psalmen" on the recto and verso of folio 120 (unnumbered). The volume contains fifty-three hymns.

A facsimile reproduction of the title page is presented below.

Etliche ſchöne
Chriſtliche Geſenz/ wie ſie
in der Gefengknuß zu Paſſaw im
Schloß von den Schweitzer Brüdern
durch Gottes gnad gedicht vnd geſun-
gen worden.

Pſalm. 139.

Die Stoltzen haben mir ſtrick gelegt/das garn haben
die mir mit ſeilen auffgeſpannen/ vnd da ich gehen ſolte/
haben ſie mir fallen zugerüſtet/Darumb ſprich ich zum
HERRN: Du biſt mein Gott ꝛc.

M. D. LXIIII.

An exact reproduction of the table of contents is as follows:

I. Herr Gott Vatter zu dir ich schrey.----------fol. 4
II. Merckt auff ir Voelcker allgemen. ---------- 8
III. Lobt den Herrn ir Heyden all. 117. Psal. ---------- 9
IV. O Herre Gott hilff mir in deinem Namen. ---------- 9
V. Sieh wie fein ists und loeblich schon, ---------- 9
VI. Herr Gott Vatter in deinem Thron. ---------- 10
VII. Wann der Herr die gefengnuss Zion. ---------- 10
VIII. O Herre Gott in deinem Thron. ---------- 11
IX. Fuer Gott den Heren woelln wir gahn. ---------- 13
X. Ein Liedlein wil ich singen. ---------- 14
XI. Gelobt sey Gott der Herre. ---------- 16
XII. O Menschen Kind vernimm mich wol. ---------- 18
XIII. Merckt auff mit Fleiss ein Himmelspeiss. ---------- 20
XIV. Mich verlangt zu allen zeyten. ---------- 23
XV. Merckt auff ir Menschen Kinder. ---------- 24
XVI. Mit lust und freuden wil ich Gott lobsingen. ---------- 27
XVII. Wir schreyen zu dir Herre Gott. ---------- 28
XVIII. Herre Gott in deinem Reiche. ---------- 30
XIX. Wolauff wolauff du Gottes Gmein. ---------- 31
XX. O Herre Gott gross ist die not. ---------- 33
XXI. Es hett ein Mann zwen Knaben. ---------- 35
XXII. Mit freuden woelln wir singen. ---------- 38
XXIII. Ir Christen rein allsampt gemein. ---------- 40
XXIV. Mein mut und sinn steht mir dahin. ---------- 42
XXV. Merckt auff ir Christen allgemein. ---------- 47
XXVI. Unser Vatter im Himmelreich. ---------- 50
XXVII. Nun wolt ich geren singen. ---------- 51
XXVIII. Ir Christen gmein die ir seyt rein. ---------- 54
XXIX. Gott Zebaoth der war und ist. ---------- 59
XXX. Christus das Lamb auff Erden kam. ---------- 63
XXXI. Merckt auff ir Voelcker gmeine. ---------- 66
XXXII. Christus der Herr is gangen. ---------- 69
XXXIII. Herr Gott Vatter im Himmelreich. ---------- 71
XXXIV. Herr Gott Vatter von dir allein. ---------- 74
XXXV. Wacht auff ir Brueder werde. ---------- 77
XXXVI. Merckt auff ir Christen alle gleich. ---------- 79
XXXVII. O Herre Gott mein not thu ich dir klagen. ---------- 82
XXXVIII. Freuwet euch ir Christen alle. ---------- 83
XXXIX. Ich wil von gantzem Hertzen mein. ---------- 85
XL. Gross unbild thut mich zwingen. ---------- 87
XLI. Wach auff wach auff o Menschenkind. ---------- 90
XLII. Von Hertzen woelln wir singen. ---------- 93
XLIII. Von Hertzen wil ich loben. ---------- 96
XLIV. In Gottes Namen heben wir an. ---------- 98
XLV. Gelobt sey Gott im hoechsten Thron. ----------100
XLVI. Hilff Gott dass ich moeg singen. ----------101
XLVII. Ir Kinder Gottes alle. ----------104
XLVIII. Wo kompt das her O Jesu Christ. ----------108

XLIX. Ich wil loben den Herren. ----------113
L. Herr Gott streit wid meine feind. ---------- 115
LI. Also redt der warhafftig Gott. ----------117
LII. Herr Gott thu mich erhoeren. ----------118

A comparison of the titles with those mentioned in Wolkan's *Lieder der Wiedertaeufer*, shows that fifty-one of the fifty-three titles appear in Wolkan. The other two must have been omitted from all succeeding editions. Wolkan describes the 1583 edition of the *Ausbund* as containing two independent parts. The second part, bearing the same title (with some orthographical changes) which this volume bears, contains fifty-one titles, all of which so far as they are mentioned specifically are to be found in this volume.

There is no question therefore that the newly discovered volume is the oldest known edition of the second part of the original *Ausbund*, and probably the older portion of it.

GEORGE SCHWERTFEGER'S POEM OF THE SWISS BRETHREN

Printed from Manuscript*

GEORG SCHWERTFEGER'S GEDICHT VON DER SCHWEITZERISCHEN GEMEINDE

1. Menschen die nach Christen fragen,
Kommt zu mir, ich kann euch sagen;
Dann ich thu noch viele kennen,
Man thut sie nur Taeufer Nennen;
Diese Lehren Immerfort,
Nur allein aus Gottes Wort.

2. All ihre Lehr und Sitten,
Sind gerichtet auf den Frieden.
Wis es Christus hat befohlen,
Halten sie's ganz unverholen;
Nur bei ihnen ganz allein,
Findet man die Lehre Rein.

3. Ich war schon oft bei ihrer Lehr,
Wo mancher groszer reicher Herr;
Aus wunder sich hat eingefunden,
Am Sonntag bei den Andachts-stunden;
Da wird Gepredigt ohne Pracht,
Wie's die Juenger Jesu han gemacht.

4. Ich sah auch wie sie Brod thun brechen,
Und ueber den Wein, den Segen sprechen;
Und wie sie die Fuesz sich waeschen,
Von Christi Lehre nichts vergessen;
Als Christen thun sie ihre Pflicht,
Vergessen auch das geringste nicht.

NOTE: The manuscript of this interesting historical poem was secured from Bishop Jonathan Kurtz of Ligonier, Indiana, who received it from his uncle, Jonathan Zook of Holmes Co., Ohio. It was copied by Zook in 1890. The Zook family settled in Fairfield County, Ohio, having migrated thither via Mifflin County, Pa., from Berks or Lancaster County, Pa. It is an old Amish family. However, how this manuscript came into the hands of Jonathan Zook is altogether unknown. Nothing is known about the author-schoolteacher, George Schwertfeger. The date of composition is uncertain, but it is probably about 1815. The one certain point of reference is the statement about the almanac-maker, Jacob Klopfenstein, who is mentioned in verse 14. E. H. Correll, in his *Schweizerisches Taeufer-Mennonitentum, Tuebingen,* 1925, reprints the title-page and frontispiece of an almanac published by Jacques Klopfenstein entitled. *L'Anabaptiste ou le Cultivateur par Experience,* which was in its second year in 1813. How long these almanacs were issued is unknown. Schwertfeger describes Klopfenstein as though he were still publishing these almanacs. It might possibly be inferred that Napoleon was still "Emperor" at the time the poem was written since the reference to him calls him "Kaiser".

5. Die Taufe wird also verwalten,
Wie's die Juenger Jesu han gehalten;
Man Tauft die groszen nur allein,
Und nicht die kleinen Kinderlein;
Sie halten's wie's geboten ist,
Und nicht wie der Widerchrist.

6. Vom Hochmuth, und von Kleiderpracht,
Wird unter ihnen nicht gedacht;
Den Bart den hauen sie nicht ab,
Sie tragen ihn bis in des Grab;
Rothe, Gelbe, Gruene Seiden,
Thun die Weiber alle Meiden.

7. Die Weiber sind den Maennern trei,
Und eh eins stirbt, ist keines Frei;
Vom Huren, und Ehebrechen,
Hoert man selden unter ihnen sprechen;
Die Jungfern wissen nichts von Seuchen,
Die unter Staedtler Tochter schleichen.

8. Gastfreiheit, und Gutthaetigkeit,
Geh' man in der Welt weit und breit;
Trift man wohl selden an,
Als wie bei einem Taeufers-mann;
Ein Jeder halten sie als Gast,
Ob sie ihn kennen gleich nicht fast.

9. Die Diener, und Prediger all,
Werden erwaehlt mit freuer wahl;
Ein Jeder gibt seine Stimme Frei,
Wer er glaubt, dasz wohl der beste sei;
Und wann sie gleiche Stimmen han,
So musz das Loos entscheiden dann.

10. Wer kennt doch auf dem Salme, nit,
Den Alten grauen Kupferschmidt;
Was dieser schon seid manchem Jahr,
Vor ein gewaltiger Prediger war.
Jetzund erwart er bald den Lohn,
Dort oben in des Himmels-Thron.

11. Dorten in dem Lothringen Land,
Ist der Christian Engel auch bekannt;
Wie der zu Gottes Preisz,
Auch sehr wohl zu Predigen weisz;
Der Christian Gerber auch,
Prediget wie es ist der gebrauch.

12. Den Allergelehrsten, den ich thu kennen,
Thut sich Joseph Stalter Nennen;
Und wann schon sechs duzent Paffen kaemen,
So thaeten sie ihm doch nichts nehmen;
Bei Zweibruecken, ist die Wohnung sein,
Wo er geliebt wird Allgemein.

13. Ich kenn noch ein sehr Gelehrter Mann,
Johannes Freuenberger ist sein Nam;
In Basel ist er sehr bekannt,
Dort oben in dem Schweizer-Land;
Der Predigt so schoen und fein,
Dasz es nicht koennte besser sein.

14. Zu Belford wohnt der Klopfensten,
Der traegt wohl einen Goldnen Stern;
Den er als Bauer hat zum Lohn,
Vom groszen Kaeuser Napolion;
Er thut auch wohl Kalender machen,
Ihr muest ihn aber nicht Auslachen.

15. Der Christian Gingerich auf dem Wallerath,
Auch einen groszen Namen hat;
Weil er ist ein brafer Mann,
Und dazu auch gut Predigen kann;
Es wird ihm dabei nicht bang,
Weil er den Dinst hat schon so lang.

16. Der Bildhauerhof in Elsasz ist,
Da wohnt auch ein guter Christ;
Mit Namen heiszt er Joseph Fritz,
Ein Mann voll verstand und witz;
Mann weisz ja sehr weit und breit,
Was das sind fuer brafe Leut.

17. Noch einer kann ich nicht auslan,
Dann er ist auch ein brafer Mann;
Michael Engel er sich nennt,
Den Brandelfinger hat ihr wohl kennt,
Dorten in dem Buetscher-land,
Ist er Jedem wohl bekannt.

18. Viele wueszt ich noch zu Nennen,
Die ich alle gut thu kennen;
In Lothringen, Elsasz und Brisgau,
In der Schweitz Pfalz und Wetterau;
Dann von der Schweitz bis in Holland,
Sind die meisten mir bekannt.

19. Der dies Liedlein hat erdicht,
Ist fuerwahr kein Taeufer nicht;
Er hat ihnen das Lob gesungen,
So gut es ihm ist gelungen;
Georg Schwertfeger er sich Nennt,
Als Schulmeister, ihr ihn wohl kennt.

20. Ihr kennt ja wohl den Buechermann,
Der die Kinder Lehren kann;
Nicht Deutsch und Franzsoesisch allein,
Auch andere sprachen nebt Latein,
Kann er lehren eure Kinder,
Wann ihr ihn Dinget auf den Winter.